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SRI RAM SHARMA

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MUGHAL GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

by

SRI RAM SHARMA

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SRI RAM SHARMA

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TO

my students, past and present,
particularly to such as are teaching
history or political science

राज्य संग्रहालय लखनऊ
क्रम संख्या——
प्राप्ति तिथि——
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PREFACE

The following pages make an attempt at describing the Mughal Government and Administration during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (1526-1707). Though Mughal institutions have now been studied for more than a century, the present work happens to be the first systematic attempt to cover all phases of Mughal governmental practices during the entire Mughal period. Sir Jadunath Sarker gave an excellent description of certain phases of Mughal administration in his Patna University Readership Lectures. But as he closely followed an eighteenth century Manual of Administration, several vital aspects of Mughal administration were not covered by him. The late Dr. Ibn Husain closed his study of the central structure with the dethronement of Shah Jahan. Dr. Pramatma Saran followed him in his study of the Provincial Government of the Mughals.

I have drawn largely upon contemporary State papers and records besides the historical sources usually drawn upon. I am thankful to the rulers (till 1947) of Kapurthala, Rampur, Udaipur, Bikaner and Jodhpur for Their Highnesses' kind permission to use some of the records and MSS in their possession. To the Universities of Aligarh and Allahabad my thanks are due for their permission to consult valuable, and in some cases rare, works in their libraries. The old Imperial Record Office (then at Calcutta), the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and Khuda Bakhsh Orienal Public Library, Bankipur, provided much useful material. My special thanks are due to the late Dr. A. C. Woolner, then Vice-Chancellor, University of Punjab, and the Dayanand College Managing Committee, Lahore (now at New Delhi), for their readily providing me facilities to carry on my researches which have resulted in the present work.

Above all I am thinkful to the doyen of Indian historians, Dr Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Kt., M.A., D. Litt (Hon.), for his unfailing assistance. He placed his unrivalled collection of books and MSS on Mughal India at my disposal whenever I asked for such assistance. He was generous enough to allow me access to his notes and to some of his then unpublished material occasionally. But for his help my studies would not have borne much fruit.

The book is a joint production of the now defunct School of Mughal History in the University of the Punjab (now in Pakistan). I learnt as much, if not more, from my students as I tried to teach them. They extended my studies to cover many neglected corners of Mughal history. I have also derived great benefit from some of the unpublished theses of my old students. For views set forth in the present work, I alone am responsible.

Some of the chapters first appeared as articles in the *Calcutta Review, New Review* (Calcutta), *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Indian Historical Quarterly and Indian Culture*. The substance of the second chapter was first published in *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad. The two chapters on religious policy are lagely based on my *Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors* published by the Oxford University Press. But the bulk of the work represents the result of my studies published here for the first time.

The original materials used in this study have been described in my *Bibliography of Mughal India*. I have not therefore added a bibliography.

SRI RAM SHARMA.

Preface to the Second Edition

In bringing out a Second Edition, the text has been thoroughly revised, notes now follow the chapter they annotate, rather than coming, as they did in the First Edition, at the end of the book. Some new material has been added in many of the chapters.

Not much has been published on Mughal Government and Administration since the publication of the first edition. Some detailed studies of the agrarian system published during the interval have not resulted in altering the general picture of the assessment of land revenue or of its collection presented here.

Sri Ram Sharma

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CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE

Growth, Extent and Divisions of the Empire

The Mughal kingdom of Delhi, though founded in 1526, first grew to imperial dimensions under Akbar. Babur's four years in India were spent in fighting and consolidating his gains. When he died in 1530 he was master of the territories now represented by the tribal area, the N.-W. F. Province of British days, the plains of the Punjab, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. His claim to the tribal area and the N.-W.F. Province was based more on his being king of Kabul than of Delhi. His son Humayun's foolish ambitions led him to dream of becoming the master of northern India from Bengal to Gujarat. This cost him his throne. The Mughal dynasty came to an abrupt end but was revived in 1555 when Humayun again sat on the throne of Delhi. When he died in 1556, he was master of the Punjab and Delhi only, and even here his title was still being hotly contested by Sikandar Sur and Adil Shah.

The Mughal empire came into being when Bairam Khan decided on Akbar's behalf to stay in India and fight it out with his rivals. Regent Bairam Khan expanded the kingdom of Delhi to comprise the Punjab, Doab, Gwalior and a part of Rajputana. Akbar conquered almost the whole of northern India and Khandesh and Berar in the Deccan. Jahangir added Ahmednagar in the south and Bengal and Orissa in the north. Shah Jahan lost finally the shadowy Mughal claims to Qandahar but advanced substantial Mughal claims over Golkanda and Bijapur in the south. Aurangzeb conquered these two states and spent twenty-seven long years in the south trying to scotch the Marathas.

Thus when Aurangzeb died in 1707, the Mughals laid claim to the whole of India, north and south, besides Kabul. In theory every square inch of this territory was claimed by the Mughals as their own. But there was quite a large number of feudatory states besides the territory governed directly by imperial servants. All this Mughal territory was divided into provinces. Their number varied from seventeen under Akbar—Kabul, Kashmir, Multan, Punjab, Delhi, Agra, Oudh, Allahabad, Bihar, Orissa, Bengal, Malwa, Ajmer, Gujarat, Sindh, Khandesh, and Berar—to twenty-one under Aurangzeb—the additions being Ahmednagar, Bidar, Bijapur and Golkanda. Every province was divided into Sarkars—sometimes called Doabs as in the Punjab, and sometimes called Mahals as in the south. These sarkars were subdivided into Parganahs. Every parganah consisted of a large number of villages. For revenue purposes there was, between the parganah and the sarkar, another unit called Dastur, the assessment circle.

Main Roads

Agra,the capital, was very well connected with the rest of the country. The grand trunk road connected it with Dacca in the east and Kabul in the north-west. It passed through Patna, Allahabad, Banaras and Mathura on one side and Delhi, Lahore and Attock on the other. In the south, a road ran to Golkanda passing through Dholpur, Gwalior, Marwar, Sirohi, Ajmer and Asirgarh. Another road kept up communications with Gujarat in the west, passing through Nagaur, Ajmer, Jodhpur, Sirohi, Idar and Ahmedabad. Multan was connected with the capital through Lahore and lay on the way to Qandahar.

Trade

A brisk trade with the rest of the Asiatic world was kept up through these and similar routes. China, Japan, the East Indies, Ceylon, Burma, Persia, Nepal, Central Asia, Arabia, the Red Sea ports and East Africa were all commercially connected with India. The European traders the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the French—took Indian goods to European markets.

The foreign trade of India at that time consisted mostly of manufactured articles. Cotton cloth from India was in great demand in Europe and elsewhere. Indian trade in dye-stuffs centred round indigo, so much sought after by European traders. Saltpetre, pepper, spices, opium, sugar, silk, woollen and silk cloth of various kinds, yarn. asafoetida (*hing*), salt, beads, borax, turmeric, lac, sealing wax and drugs of various kinds figure among the articles of export. Compared with Indian foreign trade today, that in Mughal times may not seem large; but judged by contemporary standards it was considerable.

Among the imports, horses were usually imported for imperial needs. From China, Europe, Persia and other countries fancy articles and luxury goods came for the use of the official classes and the emperor. Rare articles and curios were much in demand for the use of the court.

Lahore, Multan, Lahri Bunder (Sindh), Cambay, Ahmedabad, Surat, Satgaon, Patna and Agra formed the chief market towns of the empire from where articles of import were distributed and whither commodities for export found their way for being sent abroad.

Industries

The country abounded in mineral wealth of all kinds. Gold was found in Kumaon and in the mountains and rivers of the Punjab, copper was mined at Narnol (near Delhi) and Kumaon, silver mines in the province of Agra were worked, red stone for buildings was quarried at Fatehpur, yellow stone at Thatta and marble in Jaipur and Jodhpur. In Gujarat, Sindh and Sambhar (near Ajmer), salt was manufactured from sea water and the lake, whereas it was mined in the Punjab (Kheora and Mandi.) Iron mines of Udaipur and Bengal were worked, zinc was mined near Udaipur, and tin near Jammu. The chief centres for the production of saltpetre were at Agra and Patna. The diamond mines of Golkanda formed one of the reasons which attracted the Mughals to the south. Harpah (in

Bengal) produced some precious stones. In Chhota Nagpur diamonds were obtained from the washings of the river sand.

Textiles formed the most important industry of the period. Cotton cloth for local use was produced all over the country; but Agra, Banaras, Bidar, Bengal, Bihar and Malwa were already famous for their fine goods. Gold cloth was manufactured at Ayodhya and in Khandesh; silk cloth, fine muslins, and matresses were produced in Bengal. Flowered carpets came from Multan and woollen carpets from Kashmir were already famous. Jahangir established this industry at Amritsar. Embroidered cloth was woven in the Punjab where prints of Bajwara and Sultanpur were also famous. Printed cloth was also produced in Berar, Sironj, Burhanpur, Ahmedabad and Agra. Sialkot was the centre of tent manufacture. Carpets were made at Fatehpur Sikri, Alwar and Jaunpur. Silk cloth from fine Kasimbazar silk was produced at Ahmedabad and Surat; chintzes of Masulipatam were much sought after. The Dacca muslins were greatly prized by Europeans.

Arms and weapons were produced all over the country but the most famed were Somnath swords, while the Punjab and Gujarat supplied arms of various kinds to neighbouring area. Perfumed oil of Gujarat and rose-water from Delhi were much in demand at the court. The fish and fish-oil trade of Thatta alone attracted notice elsewhere in the country. Paper was made at Sailkot, Kashmir and Gaya. Glass articles were manufactured at Fatehpur Sikri, Bihar and Berar. Bidar was famous for its ornamental silver and gold-ware. Fancy articles of rock-salt were prepared at Kheora (in the Punjab). Utility articles in wood and leather were produced almost everywhere. Artistic work in wood, leather, or porcelain sometimes attracted European buyers. Pearl fishery flourished in southern India near Ceylon. Of course the Indian economy was self-supporting in most of the articles of common use. Pottery, bricks for house building, shawls and wooden articles were produced for local consumption all over the country. Brass utensils seem to have been similarly produced. Brick kilns must have existed only in big cities. Grinding of corn was done by hand-mills, or those driven by water or cattle. Demand for it on a large scale probably arose in the Mughal armies on the march when their needs were fulfilled by the *Banjaras*.

One important aspect of industry was the place occupied by the state in its organization and regulation. The emperor controlled a large number of royal workshops busy turning out articles for his own use and for his household, the court and the imperial army. The state was not only a great manufacturer, it was a great trader as well. It took part in the maritime trade of the country; it participated in the foreign trade with Persia and Arabia. The manufacture of salt and saltpetre was a state monopoly. From time to time other articles were also declared state monopoly.

The People

Among the people of the country many religious and races were represented. Parsis had been in India now for a long time. The Hindus counted the Jains, the Buddhists, and the Sikhs, among them. All of them were divided into the four traditional castes—Brahman, Rajput, Vaishya, and Sudra. The old Kshatriyas had in most place given way to the Rajputs. The Khatris formed then, as now, the trading class. Sudras must have formed the vast bulk of the population at one time, but in certain parts of the country—as in eastern Bengal—their number had effectively diminished on account of conversions to Islam. But the caste system had become loosened in more ways then one. Some sub-castes seemed to be lying outside the traditional organization; they had slipped out of the Kshatriyas or Vaishyas but had not yet found an anchorage elsewhere. Artisans of various types formed a good example of this process. In some places—as in Kashmir—conversion to Islam had entirely wiped out some castes, in others, as in the south or in Bengal, Hindu society had come to be organized on a two-fold basis. Brahmans never lost their identity anywhere. But earlier establishment of non-Rajput dynasties in certain parts of the country had led to the disappearance of the Kshatriyas in some areas. Sub castes like the Kayasthas or the Mohiyals had come to depend on official patronage for subsistence, the first as writers, the second as warriors. The old fluidity of the caste system had come to an end. Pride in one's caste had now penetrated to the sub castes, resulting in a meticulously detailed grading list. New subcastes had emerged out of the exigencies of public services. Kashmir developed the Kazi, Toshakhani and Agha subcases among the Brahmans, Gujarat had their counterparts in Munshi Brahmans; Qanungos hailed both from among the Brahmans and the Kayasthas in the Punjab and the Doab, Bakhshis were to be found among the Brahmans and the Mahajans.

The caste system, if it promoted exclusiveness and pride, furnished the means of corporate organization as well. In the countryside caste panchayats decided cases and supervised morals. In the big cities Mughal courts may have sometimes been resorted to for seeking remedies at law, but the supervision of morals remained the exclusive function of the caste brotherhoods. Excommunication by the caste was a svvere weapon wielded to great effect. Of course outcastes and untouchables existed in fairly large numbers.

The Muslims were divided into the Sunnis, the Shias, the Bohras and the Khojas (mostly in Gujarat) by their religious beliefs. To each variety of Islam, others were heterodox. But the Sunnis formed the great majority of the officially recognized faithful in Mughal India. Quarrels among these sub-divisions of Islam were not unknown. Racially the Muslims were divided as Turks (in India called Mughals), Afghans, Persians, Sayyids and Indian converts to Islam The last variety far outnumbered the first four classes, but was not as influential. Many converts to Islam hovered on the frontiers of Hinduism and Islam; some, like Rajput converts, still retained their class affinities with the corresponding groups in Hinduism from which they had sprung. By occupation the Muslims comprised a small ruling class, a big class of state servants, and a still bigger class employed in the Mughal army. Muslims seem to have prefedred the profession of arms to that of the quill.

Religion

Hindus and Muslims came together in the Mughal court, the Mughal camp and the public offices. The masses fraternized in the local fairs held in various places round some object of local worship or veneration. A living saint, the tomb of a dead one, the monument raised to a local Sati, or a place said to be connected with some mythological hero of the past formed a centre of great attraction. Whatever or whoever was supposed capable of working a miracle became an object of veneration, if not worship. Though the Muslims considered the Hindus Kafirs and the Hindus retaliated by holding them untouchables, a state of stable equilibrium had come to be established between the two parts of the population in the wake of Akbar's religious policy. Aurangzeb's reign disturbed this equilibrium but he favoured the Sunnis only; other classes of Muslims became, along with the Hindus, the persecuted. Again, as he tried to impose a puritanical code on the Sunnis, many Sunnis who found it unacceptable remained outside the favoured few. Thus despite his efforts to the contrary, the equilibrium reached locally in various places was but occasionally disturbed. Akbar's efforts at making Hindu religious works available in Persian translations and the Hindus' acquisition of Persian learning brought the learned of the two communities nearer. The new Vaishnavism of Chaitanya and the reforming zeal of such teachers as the Sikh Gurus and Maratha and south-Indian saints addressed their moral appeal and spiritual fervour to all alike. The tomb of Nizam-ud-Din at Delhi and of Moiuddin Chishti at Ajmer attracted Hindu and Muslim devotees from all over India. Jwala Mukhi—the live volcanic crater near Kangra—and some of the temples at

Mathura drew thousands of devotees every year, including Muslims. Purely Hindu places of pilgrimage included Hardwar, Nasik, Banaras, and Allahabad where every twelve years a great concourse of people celebrated the beginning of the Hindu new year by a purificatory bath. Garh Muktesar on the Ganges. Thanesar, Gaya, Jagannath Puri, Sabarmati and Pushkar had their own pilgrims from all corners of the country. These places of pilgrimage acted as welders as well, welding together all classes of Hindu society drawn from all over India.

Superstition flourished among the Hindus and the Muslims alike. Belief in omens and astrology was common to Hindus and Muslims both. Astrologers were attached to the courts; every man with any pretensions to greatness maintained a soothsayer. Aurangzeb's iconoclastic puritanism replaced the Hindu astrologers by their Muslim rivals. Belief in charms, amulets and other such instruments of divine favour was common to all.

Amusements

Hunting, animal fighting, cock fighting and gladiatorial contests among men formed the outdoor sports of the court. Kite-flying was common among all classes. Among indoor games, cards, chess and *chaupar* are mentioned. Every village took delight in its swings to the accompaniment of songs. Wrestling found its votaries everywhere. Local fairs saw wrestlers from far and near matched against one another to the delight of the spectators. Pigeon-flying was confined to the rich; odds were laid on the results. Polo was a popular imperial game in its several forms—polo, water-polo, night polo with ignited balls. Bathing in running water was considered meritorious; hence the popularity of swimming.

Learning and Literature

The Mughal period saw great literary and educational activity. Peace made possible by Akbar's administrative system promoted both. The Brahmans had never faltered in their pursuit of the sacred lore. But now they found generous patrons among the emperors, the royal princes and great Hindu rulers. No wonder that we find great schools of Sanskrit learning arising, particularly at Kashi, Allahabad and Navadvip. A great variety of Sanskrit works of the period is still extant in the libraries of the world. They include manuals of instruction still in use like *Siddhanta Kaumadi* on grammar, works on jurisprudence like those of Mitra Misra still cited with approval in our courts, handbooks on ceremonial still followed by the Hindus all over the country. Histories like the *Rajaprashasti* of Udaipur, biographies like that of Karm Chand of Bikaner, and travel books exemplified by *Hirasaubhagyam* seem to have been produced after Persian models. The *Akbar Nama* was translated into Sanskrit and the language it uses for translating Persian titles answers several modern problems of translation.

This was the classical age of Hindi. Above 550 writers of the period, big and small, have been traced so far. Tulsi Das's *Ramayan* still delights millions today. Sur Das and Mirabai, Matiram and Bihari, Abdur Rahim and Ras Khan, Keshav and Senapati still furnish models of poetic excellence. Bhushan, Kulpati, Lal, and Man wrote on contemporary history, illuminating the lives of Shivaji, Chhatar Sal and Maharana Raj Singh. Mehta Nensi in Jodhpur profited by Abul Fazl's example and in his History and Gazetteer of Jodhpur and History of the Rajput Tribes he followed the lead given in the *Ain-i-Akbari* and the *Akbar Nama*. The *Vichitra Natak* of Guru Gobind Singh is unique among autobiographies.

Of course Persian flourished as never before. Akbar made it the language of office and record. Good writers of Persian were very much sought after as private secretaries and ghost writers by the great. Official needs produced all types of works—histories, biographies, autobiographies, gazetteers, manuals of administration, dictionaries, works on comparative religion, books on medicine, veterinary science and arts of peace and war. Faizi alone among the writers of the period is recognized by scholars as entitled to a place in the temple of fame reserved for the writers of Persian. But the period produced Persian poets in galore. Forty-five poets and thirty-one scholars and thirty-five religious teachers of great fame are mentioned in the *Farhat-un-Nazvin* as flourishing in the reign of Aurangzeb alone. These include great teachers like Abdul Aziz and Abdul Qasim of Sialkot and Chandar Bhan Brahman who claimed he could write as well as any one else. Aurangzeb employed a large number of scholars to produce in Arabic a digest of Muslim law in the *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri.*

All this betokens considerable educational activity. Sanskrit and Arabic were read as sacred languages of Hinduism and Islam. The necessity of performing the age-long ceremonials of their clients must have produced quite a large class of Brahmans learned in Sanskrit, their studies confined to sacred texts, grammar and the systems of philosophy. The trading classes do not seem to have employed a separate class of writers from outside their own castes, the Indian writers—munims—being usually the less fortunate members of the trading community. Persian was studied for securing employment, preferably as public servants. Temples and mosques were used as schools, the priests and the mullas working as teachers as well. If we include all classes of persons who received some sort of schooling in Mughal India, their percentage will not compare unfavourably with that of the literate persons in any other part of the contemporary world.

The Arts

Other marks of Mughal culture are to be found in Mughal art—painting, architecture music, sculpture and cognate arts. Both in painting and in architecture the Mughal period saw the blending not so much of the Hindu and Muslim traditions as of Indian and Saracenic precedents. Temples and mosques could not be built alike, they went on following their classical traditions; but in the details of decorative work. the scheme of ornamentation and the creation of their backgrounds, even these could sometimes meet. Mughal and Rajput palaces drew much nearer each other. The book illustrations to the *Shiva Purana* and the *History of the Mughal Dynasty* could not follow the same ideals in exhibiting beauty of form and perfection of proportion. Yet sometimes the same painter would be producing works for both Hindu and Muslim patrons. It would thus be nearer the mark to talk of Indian painting in the Mughal period, including in that term paintings by Indian artists as well as by foreign artists. It is well to remember that among the best of Mughal painters are found Indian artists of repute. Under Akbar and Jahangir a great improvement in the technique and materials of painting took place resulting in finer brushes, use of paper, more variety and greater fineness of colour. Though artists as well as art materials were at first sent for from abroad, Jahangir, himself a great collector and connoisseur, suceeded in founding an Indian school of painting to his satisfaction. The extant examples of paintings of the period give it a place of its own in the annals of Art. Architecture during the Mughal period blossomed forth into massive forts, grand tombs, superb mosques, and magnificent temples. Examples of the last class did not survive Aurangzeb's religious zeal, but contemporary descriptions by Muslim and European writers alike bear testimony to their excellence. Forts of Akbar and Shah Jahan, tombs built by Jahangir and Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb's mosque are among the superb examples of Mughal architecture. Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, Taj Mahal at Agra, sacred to the memory of Mumtaz Mahal, the Pearl Mosque and Humayun's tomb at Delhi testify equally to the taste and judgement of their promoters and to the skill of their executors. Walled gardens with running waterways were a Mughal contribution to Indian civilization. Among the gentler arts, jewellery was to be seen ablaze in the Peacock Throne and mosaic and tile work to great advantage at Fatehpur.

Condition of the People

But what of the people? They certainly toiled but to what purpose? Stories of official corruption and oppression make us think that their lot could not have been very happy. But judged by contemporary standards, Indian masses had nothing to fear. Servile and semi-servile classes existed but their number was nothing like so large as in contemporary Russia or nineteenth century slave-owning America. The cultivator was the motive power behind all activity, state or private. He did not occupy a servile position, he could move out, sometimes to his advantage. His living, if frugal. was plentiful and joyous. The state demand, as determined first by Akbar, left with him enough of a margin to tide over bad times.

The middle class was represented by public officials and the mercantile community. The two mixed ill together and were in fact regarded as natural enemies. Their living represented their affluent circumstances as judged by contemporary standards.

The place of women was in the home. The purdah had taken root in the Punjab, Delhi and the Doab. Among the Muslims in rural areas strict seclusion came only with a rise in social circumstances. The peasants, Hindus and Muslims alike, could ill afford it and were content to leave it to their betters. Polygamy was permitted but not practised much except among a very small part of the population. Beginning with Akbar, the Mughal emperors put down the inhuman practice of forced Satis. It is best to remember, however, that the number of such victims was never very large. Rajput pride in some parts led to the practice of infanticide. Child marriage without the consummation thereof was common, sometimes boys and girls of eight years being married. Akbar's attempt at putting it down did not succeed. The women, if confined to their homes, were much respected and very often proved the power behind the throne. The great 'nobles' kept large harems of wives and concubines, with dancing girls thrown in at pleasure. Men distrusted women because of their own lax sexual code.

Epidemics, draughts, floods, famines and plague were taken philosophically as examples of God's wrath. Land revenue might be remitted or reduced. Yet the disturbance caused by a failure of crops would last long. Without much irrigation by canals agriculture was a gamble in monsoon.

CHAPTER II

NATURE OF THE MUGHAL GOVERNMENT

A Benevolent Despotism

The sixteenth century which saw the foundation of the Mughal dynasty in India is a period of despotic governments in Europe. In England it saw the Tudors at the height of their power, ordering about their subjects even in the matter most vital to them, their religion. On the Continent things were no better. Europe was not only governed by despotic rulers, the ruling families were sometimes foreigners in the country they ruled. Both on the Continent and in England a landed aristocracy might have provided a c check on the caprices of their rulers. But in England the nobility committed suicide during the Wars of the Roses leaving the new monarchy master of the field. On the Continent the nobility compromised with the monarchy by securing its own immunities rather than fashion any instruments for popular government.

The Tudor monarchs have sometime been described as royal demagogues. Mughal government can at best be described as benevolent despotism. The Mughal emperors ruled without any effective check on their authority. In theory they were only servants of the law—the Muslim law. They could neither supersede it nor modify it. But in actual practice this was true of the personal law of the Muslims alone. The emperors could not force Muslim in their private relations with one another to follow any other law. The judicial officers—the qazis—were appointed to declare and administer the Muslim law among the Muslims. The Hindus were governed by their own customs or the Hindu law. The Mughal emperors could in theory introduce changes in the Hindu law or custom, but as they lacked the machinery to enforce such changes, even the Hindu law was left alone.

They never claimed the right to define the religous beliefs of their people, Hindus or Muslims.

Public Law

But the public law was another affair. Organization of government had long been recognized in practice as lying beyond the vision of such pious people as the qazis. Even in countries like Persia, Afghanistan, or Egypt where the entire population had been converted to Islam, the Muslim rulers had felt it necessary to incorporate pre-Muslim customs of the countries in the organization of the governments. In India where the preponderant bulk of the population refused to accept Islam, it was all the more difficult to organize government according to the Muslim law. The rulers exercised greater liberty in the organization of the government. They acknowledged themselves as the agents of Islam interested in its spread among the non-Muslims and in securing conformity to orthodox practices among the Muslims. In return the theologians usually left them alone in the organization of government. If questioned directly, they did sometimes pronounce certain methods of carrying on administration unlawful but, like Qazi Mughis-ud-Din under Ala-ud-Din, they were careful to add discreetly that they did not thereby condemn or oppose the administration. Thus, in actual practice, the Muslim system of administration as prevalent in other Muslim lands, never took root in India. The practices of the first four Khalifas were exalted by the Muslim jurists as the Muslim polity. But the Shias differed violently from this view. Thus a good deal of latitude was left to Muslim rulers in the organization of the government. It would be nearer the mark to say, as the following pages will amply testify, that in organizing their government most of the Mughal emperors felt themselves at liberty to order things as they pleased, provided what they did was not actually opposed to the *Quran*.

The Mughal Emperors assumed titles which placed their authority far beyond the reach of the jurists. Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb all claimed to be the 'Shadow of God', 'Vakil of God on earth', 'Khalifa [deputy of the prophet] of their age and country.' This did not, however, amount to the assertion that there was a 'divinity hedging the king', much less did it assert the divine right of kings which the contemporary Stuarts were proclaiming in England. Shakespeare could talk of the divinity of the king because the Tudors had rescued England from the feudal anarchy of the Wars of the Roses. James I could loudly proclaim himself king by the grace of God, because he had succeeded to the English throne despite many obstacles which men had been placing in his way. The Stuarts asserted that in the entire field of administration and government they were accountable to nobody for their actions. The Mughal emperors could never dream of making such a claim. In public administration they never claimed the right to do anything which was contrary to the Quran. It was as successful agents for the spread of Islam that they could claim to be the shadow of God on earth. James II based his divine right on the prevalent belief among the Anglicans that they owed passive obedience to the king, and that they should practise non-resistance. He used it for the purpose of uprooting Anglicanism in England, the very faith which made him divine. His claim was upheld by the highest Anglican divines in his kingdom, who emerged as non-jurors under William III owing theoretical allegiance to James II beyond the seas. When Akbar approved of a petition to clarify his position in the administration, he did not claim the authority to do what he liked; he simply asserted that his innovations should not be condemned unless they were contrary to the *Quran*. Thus the *Quran* was recognized as the fundamental law of the State. This was exactly what the Stuarts in England were denying at this time. England, they asserted, had no fundamental laws beyond their reach. They themselves were the Law and the State. A fundamental law and the divine right of kings are incompatibles.

Absence of any Check on the Emperor

This should have tempered Mughal despotism and rendered it a 'limited monarchy' of sorts. It failed to do so because there was no institution in the Mughal state capable of effectively compelling the rulers to hold their hands if they ever transgressed the law. The office of the Sadr-us-Sadr (the chief theologian) came very near to providing such an instrument, but the stress and strain to which it was subjected worsted it in its fight against the crown. The Sadr was the highest theologian in the state and the king's religious preceptor. Under the Sultanate, the highest honours had been paid to him. But there is no tradition of even the most respected Sadrs interfering in the affairs of government. They seem to have been respected because they left the administrators alone and were content with exacting personal respect and honours. Only twice under the Mughal emperors did the Sadrs find themselves in opposition to their rulers. When Akbar changed the religious policy of the state and intended making the law of heresy and the discriminative code against the Hindus inoperative, Abdun Nabi, his Sadr, incurred his displeasure. He lost in the end and his successor lost many of his powers. Shah Jahan's Sadr refused to proclaim Aurangzeb as Shah Jahan's successor as the former was still alive. Here was Islamic polity working as the fundamental law of the Mughal state. But the resemblance is only superficial. The Sadr was appointed by the emperor and held office during his pleasure. Aurangzeb removed the inconvenient Sadr and found another. He declared that though a son could not ordinarily be proclaimed king as long as his reigning father was alive, his own case formed an exception. He was exercising royal power because his father Shah Jahan was incapacitated from acting—presumably because Aurangzeb had imprisoned him! Thus the office of the Sadr failed to make a limited monarchy of the Mughal government. It remained a despotism.

Was it a Theocracy?

But if the *Quran* formed the fundamental law of the Mughal state, it may be argued, it was a theocracy. But a theocracy without an independent religious head—independent either because of his appointment by an outside authority or because of his holding office for life—is impossible. It is further necessary that the authority of such a theologian should be recognized without dispute by the vast bulk of the population. The Mughal government lacked such an office. Islam recognizes no Pope infallible in his interpretation of the law. The Sadr was more a Chief Justice than a Pope or an Archbishop. The king had no higher right to interpret Islam than the meanest of his subjects. The king could not claim to speak independently on behalf of God in defence of his actions. And for most of his non-Muslim subjects his binding himself to observe the Muslim law meant nothing. Cromwell claimed to be interpreting God's will oftener than any one of his Mughal contemporaries. The Georges considered themselves bound to the Church of England. The Mughal government was no more a theoracy than the government of George II in Ireland.

We shall understand it all the better if we remember that to rebel against the Mughal rulers was not regarded a sin. While in contemporary England, now Roman Catholics, now Protestants, were dying for denying on religious grounds the right of their rulers to the throne, Mughal India never saw such a spectacle. Hindu and Muslim rebels were executed or otherwise punished alike. But so little was rebellion supposed to be a sin, that it became the favourite pastime of the Mughal princes. Neither Jahangir nor Shah Jahan became tainted by their rebellions against their fathers. Aurangzeb enjoyed the luxury of a father in prison. In a theocratic state such a phenomenon could not have occurred, much less tolerated.

Religion mostly a Private Matter

The Mughal government was then a despotism, but of a peculiar brand. Its absolute authority was never so interpreted by its rulers. The emperors left alone quite a large part of their subjects. Unlike their European contemporaries, the Mughal emperors did not concern themselves with the religious beliefs of their people. Jahangir and Shah Jahan left even the religious practices of their subjects largely uncared for. When Aurangzeb stood forth as the champion of the Sumni beliefs, he put down unerthodox practices without in any way trying to open windows into the souls of his subjects. Unlike contemporary Europe, Mughal India left belief free and untrammelled. Theoretically and to a large extent in practice, the judiciary was independent in a sense of its own in Mughal India. Administration of justice through Hindu panchayats and qazis' courts owed nothing to the king, though he made provisions for the maintenance of the qazis. The Mughal rulers made a few laws of their own but did not claim the *right* to do so. Aurangzeb had the Muslim law codified for the guidance of his qazis but the code, the *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri,* is a digest of the Muslim law as understood by classical writers and is in no way inspired by its being edited in Aurangzeb's time. The commentaries of Mitra Misra and Raghunandan on Hindu law influenced its contemporary interpretation to a larger extent than did the *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*. But Raghunandan and Mitra Misra did not write to imperial orders and owed nothing of their vogue to imperial favour.

A Muslim State?

Was it a Muslim state that the Mughals thus supported? The rulers were certainly Muslims, latitudinarian, indifferent, or zealous. The criminal law enforced in the Qazis' Courts was the Muslim law. But when Akbar modified it in apostacy and related crimes, his departures were accepted all the more easily because this departures formed acts of forbearance by the state. If the government would not persecute the Hindus that was the end of the matter. But it would be difficult to assert that the public administration was inspired entirely by even the then current ideas of Muslim polity. Organization of the government, the ceremonies and the procedure in the Mughal court, the method of raising revenue and recruiting public servants owed as much, if not more, to Indian traditions as to Islam. The vast majority of their subjects lay outside the pale of Islam. Muslim rulers in India realized the impossibility of converting all the Hindus to Islam early in its history. The Hindus were largely left in the enjoyment of their institutions. This involved leaving the public law of the country alone in certain respects. In certain others, however, Islam invaded the public law. The religious policy of Babur, Humayun and Aurangzeb was certainly inspired by the current notions of Muslim public law. But Akbar, Jahangir and, to some extent, Shah Jahan were otherwise inspired in their religious policy. The Mughal Government comprehended both varieties. It would be difficult to consider one the norm and the other an aberration. Aurangzeb's variety had a shorter life than Akbar's. As we shall see, it rendered a greater service to the Mughal state than the former variety. The latter half of Aurangzeb's reign was in fact a declaration that till then the Mughal government had not been inspired by what Aurangzeb considered Muslim ideals or the Muslim law. But it is doubtful even if a majority of Aurangzeb's Muslim subjects agreed with him in his interpretation of these ideals. The Shias, the Khojas, and the Bohras, besides a majority even of his Sunni subjects, did not welcome his innovations. In contemporary Europe Christianity, in its Catholic or Protestant variety, formed the fundamental law of the different European states to a larger extent than did Islam in India. Except in Roman Catholic Ireland or Protestant Holland nowhere else did the faith of the preponderant majority of the people differ from that of their rulers as it did in India. The Mughal state, however, did not put the faith of the preponderant section of the people beyond the pale as was being done in Ireland or Holland. We would thus be justified in identifying the Mughal state as a Muslim state in the same way in which we could talk of the French province of Holland forming a Roman Catholic state or contemporary Ireland forming a Protestant state. The rulers were certainly Muslims, a large number of Muslims probably considered themselves belonging to the governing class. Like other Muslims, the rulers considered themselves agents of Islam. They were however free to interpret the demands of this status as they liked. The upper classes of the Hindus forming the official classes were possibly influenced in their dress and outward behaviour by the example of their Muslim colleagues. But Islam influenced the Hindu masses as much as Hinduism still governed the lives of the Muslim masses who were usually converts from Hinduism. Under the circumstances, to exalt the Mughal state in India into a Muslim polity may provide a convenient popular label but sober history hardly bears witness to this transformation. The Mughal government came perilously near being a Muslim state when Aurangzeb surrendered the imperial prerogative even in matters of taxation to his theologians. But even he found it impossible to govern according to what he was told was the Muslim law and had to make concessions in favour of extra Islamic, if not unIslamic, practices of his predecessors.

It has been sometimes suggested that the Mughal government formed a good example of oriental despotism. But to classify despotism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries into oriental and occidental varieties is not justifiable. We might with some justifiation so classify governments in the nineteenth century but not of any earlier period. Some have argued that the existence of a feudal nobility along with absolute rulers in Europe at this time was some guarantee of the conversion of these states into democracies later on. But a study of European history hardly justifies such a belief. If anything, fedual institutions co-existing with absolute rulers made the masses suffer a double tyranny—of the king as well as of their feudal overlords. Europe changed its form of government in the nineteenth century not because of, but in spite of, its feudal institutions.

CHAPTER III

THE EMPEROR

No Law of Succession

The emperor was the pivot of Mughal administration. Yet curiously enough his position was far from secure. The manner and method of the creation of a Mughal emperor considerably affected his position. Babur, though at one time he claimed a part of the Punjab as a descendant of Timur, based his dominion on conquest. His death-bed saw intrigues for succession which were to become a normal feature of Mughal history. Mehdi Khwaja's own indiscretion cost him the Mughal throne. Babur's territories were divided between Kamran and Humayun. While Humayun sat on the throne of Delhi, Askari, Hindal and Kamran all made bids for it, sometimes under highly ridiculous circumstances. Akbar came peacefully into his heritage, but he succeeded only to one-half of Humayun's dominions, Kabul going to his younger half-brothre Hakim as an independent kingdom. Babur's division of Mughal territories between Kamran and Humayun was thus repeated when Hakim got what had in Humayun's reign been assigned to Kamran. Salim rebelled against Akbar, and Khusru and Khurram against Jahangir. When Jahangir died suddenly, the throne was kept warm for Shah Jahan by a puppet, Bulaqi, who was quietly murdered when Shah Jahan arrived on the scene. Of all the Mughal emperors it was Shah Jahan's misfortune to encounter a successful rebellion led by his son, Aurangzeb. As a result he passed the last eight years of his life as a closely guarded prisoner of his son. Akbar rebelled against Aurangzeb and was the only rebel Mughal prince who was hunted out of the country for his rebellion. Aurangzeb is said to have divided his empire among his sons by his will. This proved ineffective. His death was followed by the first open war of succession in Mughal India and soon the Mughal empire came to an end giving place to several succession states and the Maratha Empire.

This story brings out certain prominent features of the Mughal kingship which need notice. There does not seem to have been any generally accepted law of succession. Dominion was not even supposed to run in the house of Babur alone. Mehdi Khwaja was Babur's son-in-law. Claim to the throne does not seem to have been confined to the sons of the last ruler. Khusru, Akbar's grandson, was a hot favourite for the throne when Akbar lay dying. After Jahangir's accession, he proclaimed himself emperor and it took several months of hard campaigning to dispose of his claims for the time being. Nomination by the reigning monarch did not always have much effect. Babur's Prime Minister, Khalifa, knew Babur's wishes when he was trying to supplant Humayun. Akbar's acceptance of Jahangir as his successor on his death-bed put an apparent end to the machinations that had been going on for keeping Jahangir out. But Khusru did not accept it as decisive and rebelled in the hope that his erstwhile supporters would rally round him. Jahangir's preference changed from one son to another. But on his death, his nominee Shahryar was quietly passed over. Aurangzeb's rebellion against Shah Jahan challenged the right of the reigning monarch both to nominate a successor and to take steps that his nominee should succeed him. Aurangzeb's sons ignored his alleged will. The eldest sons do not seem to have possessed any incontestable claim. Aurangzeb was not Shah Jahan's eldest son. Shah Jahan had become eldest only by having Khusru murdered. Jahangir was an only son when Akbar died, but it is arguable that those who were putting forward Akbar's grandson would not have hesitated from supporting Daniyal if he had been living. Neither was the empire considered an indivisible entity. Babur's kingdom was inherited by Kamran and Humayun; Humayun's dominion was divided between Hakim and Akbar; Aurangzeb intended a four-fold division of the country.

All this brings out the central fact that among Muslims there was no valid law of succession. Monarchy as a political institution was unknown to early Muslim tradition. The first Muslim Khalifa—political ruler—acquired his office by an expression of the general will of the Muslims and so did his three successors. Then came the division of Islam among the Shias and the Sunnis. The Sunnis denied the doctrine of inheritable succession to the Khilafat to a family however exalted; the Shias asserted it as a part of their claim to sovereignty. Both agreed, however, in holding that all political authority resided in the Khalifa. Henceforward, though there were more than one Khalifas at a time claiming the allegiance of the Muslims, the whole Muslim world paid at least lip service to some Khalifa. This in its turn prevented the emergence of any traditions about succession in states which did not formally claim to be sovereign in their own right. Whosoever among the contestants to power in a particular state emerged as triumphant could easily square one of the Khalifas. Thus the Muslim rulers of India till 1526 pretended to rule the country as the deputy of some far-off Khalifa. There could not be a law of succession among viceroys.

No Outside Allegiance

Babur did not seek any outside support for his authority in Kabul or India. Following him, his successors in India recognized no Khalifa as a superior overlord. It is doubtful whether at this time anywhere else in the Muslim world even the nominal authority of the Khalifa was recognized outside his own domains. But this did not change the basic fact—the absence of any provision in Islamic law for the transmission of authority from one ruler to another. Every ruler's authority was personal, and valid only so long as he could enforce it. Islam thus knew no king *de jure*, only the ruler de *facto*. The earliest tradition about the first four Khalifas was that they had been elected by their fellow Muslims to rule over them. So the only 'law'—Hadis—governing the creation of a government asserted the right of the Faithful to elect their own rulers. Yet it envisaged only one ruler for the entire Muslim world, it provided no means of election; it laid down no qualification for electors, it left 'election' vaguely in the air. No wonder that on its positive side this 'tradition' provided no means of making republicanism in Islam effective. It did, however, produce negative effects. No Muslim ruler could ever claim that he held authority in his dominion by law. Successful rebellion created a title at law as valid as that it replaced. Naturally rebellion wos not looked down upon as much as elsewhere. Herein lay a disintegrating principle that in Mughal India, as elsewhere, was to lead to dire results.

Ceremony of Accession

A Mughal emperor's accession to power reminded one of a fundamental law of Muslim polity. The new ruler proclaimed his accession by mounting the throne. It could vary from the earth platfrom which Akbar mounted at Kalanor to the peacock throne that Aurangzeb ascended. The throne had to be about 3 feet high. Accession could be proclaimed anywhere, as Akbar's was proclaimed far out of his capital. Murad Shuja, Salim and Khurram did not have to come to Delhi or Agra to proclaim themselves kings. But mounting the throne was not a religious ceremony like the English or Continental coronation. It would be valueless unless it implied considerable support. As soon as a king mounted the throne, the courtiers present declared their allegiance. A Mughal king thus mounted the throne at a time and in a place where he could be sure of securing the allegiance of a large number of his officials, civil and military. At Jahangir's death, Shah Jahan hastened uncrowned from the south to mount the throne at Agra where he had his supporters.

As the new ruler took his seat on the throne, the court would resound with the crise of 'Badshah Salamat' proclaiming to the rest of the country that a new king had ascended the throne. The new king would announce a breach with his non-royal past by taking a title—a Salim would blossom forth into a Jahangir, a Khurram into a Shah

Jahan. Presents would then be offered to the new king, who would make new appointments. A design for the new coins would be selected and a verse to adorn them chosen. The popular proclamation would come on the Friday following the accession. Before the Muslims assembled for the Friday prayers, the Imam would start by reading the Khutba. This would include prayers, among others, for the reigning monarch. The new monarch's name would now be added to the list. Usually the first Khutba would be read by the Sadr. The inclusion of a ruler's name in the Khutba read among the assembled Muslims was supposed to imply passive election by the faithful. The fear of popular disapproval could make a new ruler delay the formal assumption of power. Aurangzeb's took place when he had removed all such obstacles from his path. Ordinarily the accession of a new ruler followed the death of the old one at once. The throne was seldom left vacant. After Humayun's death. the news was kept concealed for three days. Jahangir's death saw Bulaqi on the throne in the interests of Shah Jahan.

Emperor's Prerogatives

Certain honours were reserved for the emperor. Day in and day out a body of soldiers under a high public servant was on guard, its members ready to act as royal messengers whenever needed. The officer of the guard was changed every twenty-four hours, taking his contingent with him. Under Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan royal musicians were in attendance upon the emperor day and night by turns. They roused the emperor from his sleep by sweet melodies. Thereafter, they announced the termination of every *pahar* (3 hours' interval). They also announced the entry of the emperor in the assembly by their music. Whenever the emperor was in a mood for relaxation, he would command his musicians to perform and the assembly would be flooded with their music. Aurangzeb discontinued the practice in 1667. The emperor went to the mosque for Friday prayers in a palki; all subjects, however high their status, had to walk thereto.

When the emperor gave a horse or an elephant to any one, the favoured subject would place the bridle or the elephant goad on his back and make obeisance to his royal donor. As the emperor set out on a journey or came out of the palace, kettle drums were beaten to announce the emperor on the march. He never signed any official documents; they bore his seal. No subject was excused the trouble of signing his name by sealing his letters,. The emperor was the one fountain head of honours and titles in the imperially held territories. He alone could sit for *darshan* in the morning in the salutation balcony to receive the first honours of the day from his subjects. *Taslim* and *Kurnish* again were due only to the emperor. No one else could keep other Mughal subjects standing in his presence. Though in the Mughal court the emperor alone sat on the throne, sometimes a favourite prince—a Khurram or a Dara—was honoured by the provision of a seat for him in the court.

Some sports and amusements were considered royal. Mihiragula of Kashmir used to delight in sending his elephants rolling down the mountain side. The Mughal emperors limited themselves to seeing the elephants fight in their presence. Hunting the lions, Bernier tells us, was a royal game; but he admits the emperor could permit others to do so. We have independent evidence to prove that this permission was not always necessary for royal princes and Rajput rulers. The princes could even permit others to hunt tigers and lions when they were reported doing damage. The *kumargah* hunt was certainly a royal privilege—no one else could afford the services of such a large number of beaters for days together. Thousands of them were employed to surround the game over a large area in a chosen forest and when the circle got small enough for royal convenience and safety, the emperor would start the hunt. He was accompanied by a large number of his officials. They were not, however, allowed to attack any animal marked for 'royal pleasure' Once this almost cost Jahangir his life which was saved by the timely intervention of Anirai who thus became *Singhdalan*—Killer of lions.

The Emperors as Administrators

The emperor was the fountain of all honours, the source of all administrative power, and the supreme dispenser of justice. These were not empty phrases. The Mughal emperors were very hardworking administrators, working harder than most public servants are supposed to work today; they kept longer hours and observed fewer holidays. There were four royal methods of transacting business. The emperor sat in the Diwan-i-Khas-o-Am attended by the high administrators at the capital and transacted State business in public. In the Ghusl Khana—his private audience chamber, so called because Akbar came straight to it after bathing—he held confidential consultations with his ministers and such high officers as he cared to summon. When he was unable to appear at either of these two places, or when matters of pressing interest emerged suddenly, he summoned a few of his highest officers inside his private apartments to discuss and dispose of necessary business with them. Once a week he held a court of justice. To these four occasions might be added the king's appearance in a balcony early in the morning when he received such complaints and demands for redress as his subjects chose to present to him.

Jharoka Darshan

To take the last first, Akbar introduced this method of public appearance and Aurangzeb discontinued it. It served several purposes. It announced to all and sundry that the king was alive and functioning. This prevented lying rumour from doing mischief. As soon as Shah Jahan recovered from his illness, he hastened to show himself in his usual place to proclaim his recovery and consequent assumption of the reins of government. Theoretically it allowed unrestricted access to the royal presence and thus provided the one occasion when the subjects could approach the king without hindrance from his officials. Some of the people under Akbar got into the habit of looking at the emperor, as at an auspicious symbol, and considering themselves blessed by the sight. This continued under Jahangir as well and-gave rise to the cult of *Darshanayas*—king's devotees—who, it was said, considered it unlawful to take their meals without seeing the emperor. It has been suggested that Akbar began the custom in order to satisfy this hunger for a sight of the royal face. This is putting the cart before the horse. The vogue of considering it essential to see the king could only come into existence after the sight of king's face was available. Since the *Darshanayas* could not have accompanied Akbar and Jahangir in all their travels, this extreme expression of their devotion to the two emperors could only have implied having a sight of the emperor when he was residing at the capital.

Conduct of State Business

The emperors came to the *Jharoka darshan* at sunrise after their morning devotions. Most imperial palaces had a special window—*Jharoka*—assigned for the purpose. This would overlook a spacious court where not only could large numbers of people get together for *darshan,* but which could serve certain other purposes as well. The *darshan* proper would last for a short period, after which those who had assembled for this purpose alone would disperse. A review of troops assembled for the day's review was then held. This done, the emperor felt himself free to receive petitions. Akbar is said to have decided them on the spot and thus devoted about four hours to the whole business. Jahangir seems to have continued the custom though he did not devote as much time to it. Shah Jahan only received the petitions here but passed orders on them later on. The time that Akbar .devoted to the work and Badayuni's complaints about the 'low people' assembling here in Akbar's time suggest that the institution worked effectively then. Under Jahangir we find admission to the enclosure jealously guarded by officials. Complaints unpalatable to parties in power could not be made here. The highhandedness of a Governor of Bengal was brought to the notice of Jahangir only by complainants when they had disguised themselves as jugglers from Bengal. Shah Jahan complained that he could not obtain even twenty petitions daily. That again seems to suggest inaccessibility to the royal presence.

At noon the emperor viewed from here elephant fights held twice a week; lions fought buffaloes, leopards killed the deer, jugglers performed their tricks, to amuse the emperor.

The *jharoka darshan* thus mainly served as a means of proclaiming the king's presence amidst his subjects.

Diwan-i-Am

The king next appeared in the Diwan-i-Am. Shah Jahan came to it straight from the *Jharoka*. Aurangzeb appeared twice here in the forenoon and the afternoon. Akbar seems to have held it in the afternoon. The morning session under Shah Jahan seems to have been devoted to the inspection of workshops and stables and public business proper seems to have been done in the afternoon only. Aurangzeb held two public sessions for some years but confined himself to one afternoon session later on.

It was not a Darbar as we understand the term today—a place for formal audience and amusement of the king. It did not provide any *tamasha*. It was the king-in-court transacting state business in public. But it was not a popular assembly open to all and sundry. Admission was regulated by permits. It was an assembly of officials presided over by the king.

The court had a set of officers. The Mir-i-Tuzak acted as the master of ceremonies and regulated the admission, the ceremonial and the procedure of the court under instructions from the king. The Arz-i-Mukarrar acted as the chief secretary. The imperial newswriter attended the court with two reporters in daily attendance. The Superintendent of the Royal Post was present with a staff of royal messengers. The Chief Huntsman, the Superintendents of the Royal Camp, the Imperial Bodyguard and the Guards were always in attendance upon the king.

The business of the day began with the reading of the previous day's orders. They were confirmed and then sent to various departments for proper action. After this, the Diwan or the Bakhshi read extracts from the official letters they had received from provincial governors, district officers, commanders of garrison towns and collectors of customs. The emperor would listen attentively and where needed, issue orders promptly. Some of the high officers in the court would then submit the requests of the state servants serving in the mofussal, from the private letters received by them. These were occasionally reinforced by the statements made by the vakils (agents) of the officers concerned. The emperor would pause a little for deliberation and then announce his orders, usually calling for a report from the Diwan, the Bakhshi, or the Khan-i-Saman. Sometimes the applicant was told to approach his immediate superiors. The Imperial Newswriter would also read extracts from the reports sent by his subordinates from different parts of the country. The superintendents of various workshops or store keepers of royal stores would also make reports and submit their demands. Royal messengers sent out by the emperor for bringing reports from local officials submitted them here. Royal commissioners appointed to make investigations locally tendered their reports. These messengers and the commissioners had probably been appointed some time earlier in order to decide promptly questions arising out of the requests of the public servants, their agents, or the complaints made by citizens.

Besides these, appointments of all mansabdars were made here; questions of their promotion, demotion and dismissal, the grant of jagirs to them in lieu of salary, posting them to various jobs, all required the sanction of the emperor which was granted in the darbar. The governors, leaders of expeditions, garrison commanders. fojdars and collectors of customs made their submissions and requests in connexion with mansabdars serving under them and for filling vacancies occuring in their departments. The governors of Kabul and Bengal were usually allowed greater latitude in filling vacancies under them. Not all the recommendations of these officers were always accepted though, in rejecting them, the emperors took care to see their action would not appear wayward. Sometimes the leader of a military expedition of great importance—like Jai Singh sent against Shivaji by Aurangzeb—would be vested with full powers to decide all questions arising out of his conduct of the expedition under his command. Usually the governors, fojdars and garrison commanders had equal access to the imperial court with regard to the matters in which they were concerned. Fojdars and thanadars were very often mansabdars of very high rank. The questions they submitted and the recommendations they made would not usually be of a technical nature. The provincial revenue officials, however, were to submit all their reports to the office of the imperial Diwan who then presented the papers with his own recommendations. Even the under-diwans at the capital were required to submit their papers through the imperial Diwan who read the appropriate portions with his suggestions in the open court. Action was sometimes taken on the report of the newswriters without waiting for any official explanation from the mansabdars or their departmental heads.

In theory every mansabdar enjoyed the right of access to the emperor, in person when he was at the capital and through his submissions when he was away.

Some of the typical cases dealt with by Aurangzeb would best illustrate the working of the court, though it should be remembered that his predecessors did not go into many questions of detail in which he interested himself. On July 23, 1689 a complaint was presented to the emperor against the diwan of Hyderabad. The local newswriter was asked to submit his report on the complaint. A complaint against the fojdar of Hissar was referred to the governor of Delhi for report on April 15, 1693. The complaint of a servant against his mansabdar master resulted in his being summoned to the court through an imperial messenger. When a case of theft was reported, orders were sent to the governor asking him to depute the local deputy fojdar to trace the thieves. When a governor of Kashmir submitted that the climate of the place did not suit him in winter, he was allowed to live at Lahore.

Ambassadors, distinguished visitors, defeated rebels, vanquished rulers and their representatives were all received in the darbar bringing their presents with them. Again, honours were conferred on them here, gifts given and the terms to be granted to them announced.

The great officers of the state sent to the provinces took their leave of the emperor and received his parting instructions here. Successful commanders returning from their expeditions were honoured by being received in the open court, sometimes even with their retinue.

On festive occasions. the emperor received the presents of his mansabdars, present and absent. He also announced his own gifts to them. The king's birthdays, the lunar and, till Aurangzeb's reign, the solar new year days, the Id and the Dusserah were thus celebrated with great eclat. The king was weighed against precious metals and other articles the value of which was then recorded, the amount being reserved for the king's charity in the ensuing year.

"Here we find strange happenings in the various parts of the empire reported, revenue accounts tendered, leave to officers sanctioned, movements of treasury reported, titles conferred and withdrown, order of precedence in the court settled, grants to students, scholars, and theologians sanctioned. We find Aurangzeb changing and rechanging dates, making public enquiries about the health of his absentee officials, sending his own physicians to attend on them, and giving public permission to his officials to call at their bedside. Here in the open court marriages were promoted and marriage portions fixed, tips received by the imperial servants from mansabdars reported and apportioned, receipt of fruits and scents from distant places recorded and their disposal ordered, deaths of prominent officials reported, arrangements for their dependants sanctioned, the emperor's representatives named to call at the house of the deceased to terminate mourning. Purgatives taken, bloodlettings undergone, dreams dreamt—all were openly discussed and their effects canvassed."

Two secretaries belonging to the Imperial Newswriter's department were on duty every day by turns. Everything said or done in the court was recorded. As the record was read the next day for imperial confirmation, agents of the various high mansabdars serving outside the capital would take it down and submit it to their principals as the news of the court.

The emperor's inspection of the stables and his enquiries after his favourite mounts were, under Shah Jahan, supposed to be a part of the work transacted in the darbar. The king would inspect his elephants, horses, mules, camels and cows, his hunting animals and his birds of prey and would award suitable reward and punishment to those who looked after them.

The department of the Khan-i-Saman made heavy demands on the king's time in the court. Superintendents in charge of various workshops had to be guided by the imperial taste; thus all questions concerning workshops, buildings, roads, tents, gardens, imperial sports and amusements were decided here.

The Ghusl Khana and the Khilwat Khana

The Ghusl Khana was a small chamber for doing important work and holding important consultations where only the highly placed officials of the king were admitted. The commanders of expeditions about to leave or governors proceeding on their appointments were sometimes called to hold confidential consultations with the king here. Admission was regulated by permits and a Superintendent of the Ghusl Khana secured the observance of its rules of etiquette. Under Shah Jahan at least, if an official was held guilty of an offence against decorum in the Ghusl Khana he was not allowed to leave till he had paid the fine inflicted on him. It was an unceremonial gathering, Jahangir would interrupt its proceedings by taking his usual cups of wine here. Akbar discussed religious questions here as well. The king sat either on a throne or a chair, or on a rich carpet specially spread for him. Members present were allowed to sit here. All kinds of business done in the Diwan-i-Am-o-Khas could be transacted here if the king was in the mood.

The Khilwat Khana was any place where the king decided to hold confidential consultations in privacy. The Diwan and the Bakhshi were almost always present. Other officers concerned could be summoned if the king so desired. These consultations were sometimes held when the king feared he would be unable to attend public business either in the Ghusl Khana or the Diwan. At other times a matter of great emergency and importance would lead to their being summoned at an inconvenient moment when consultations were not possible otherwise.

The Court of Justice

Every Wednesday the Diwan-i-Am-o-Khas would be converted into a court of justice. The Superintendent of the Court presented the aggrieved persons, probably explaining in each case their grievances. The king would then do justice as he thought fit. Some cases were sent for local enquiry; imperial mace-bearers were sent along with the complainants to bring to the court the results of the official enquiries. The emperor sat here to trace culprits, to investigate cases and to pronounce jugement. Sometimes a Muslim accused would refuse to be judged by the emperor when the case would be sent to the appropriate qazi for disposal. At other times an emperor would resent the waste of his time caused by persons approaching him with requests that could have been easily decided by the local qazis. It is probable that most of the cases brought here were heard in equity. Other cases might have been complaints against the well-placed accused. Shah Jahan at one time desired that twenty cases be heard at his court; he discovered this to be impossible; Aurangzeb issued orders in 1696 that twenty-five cases be brought before him everyday. Even such modest demands were not fulfilled.

The rest of the time of the emperor was spent in the harem or at prayer, in sleep or in amusements.

It is necessary to remember that the Mughal emperors seldom missed attendance at any of the administrative conferences. As long as this continued, all went well with the empire. No one could be in the company of such a large number of highly placed officials without learning something from them. No one who was a fool could long escape being found out here. It was not always possible that the Mughal emperors applied themselves to every question; they were influenced by the recommendation of their high officials. This busy time-table kept the administrators up to scratch. No one could assume that he would be able easily to get away with his folly or want of judgement. The Mughal emperor thus formed the pivot on which the entire administration turned. In camp or in the palace, well or ill, he never neglected business and thus always played an important part in the administration of the country. He presided over it; he inspired its activities; very largely he determined its character.

Royal Servants

The emperor had a set of officers of his own securing the efficient discharge of his many functions and proper organization of his sports. amusements. travel and daily life. A Mir Tuzak (Lord Chamberlain) looked after the work in the Durbar-i-Am.o-Khas. A Chief Secretary (Arz Mukarrar) selected passages from despatches sent to the king for submission to him. The Superintendent of the Ghusl Khana and the Daroga of the Court of Justice made his work easy in these two places. The Chief Huntsman organized his hunts, the Mir-i-Manzil made arrangements for his travel. A corps of royal messengers and another of mace-bearers ran to and fro at his command. The Superintendent of Dak Choki maintained efficient means of securing of news from all over the country. The Newswriter kept him informed of whatever was happening even in the distant parts of the empire.

CHAPTER IV

HIGH OFFICERS OF STATE

Position in the Early Days

No absolute ruler, however diligent, can discharge alone the multifarious duties of the government at the centre. He must have round him persons to whom he can trust his commissions, who act as his eyes and ears and spare him a lot of detailed work. Of course the exact status that such high agents of royal policy occupy in the government varies with the rulers. Under the early Mughals, Babur had Mehdi Khwaja as his Prime Minister and Zain-ud-Din as his Sadr. Humayun does not seem to have appointed any one to a position higher than that of secretaries. On his return Bairam Khan occupied an exceptional position in the state, but more as a great commander than as a high administrator. During Akbar's minority Bairam Khan acted as his regent, discharging all the functions of the head of the state in Akbar's name. As was but natural, the growing up young man could not very long accept this state of things, nor could he remain permanently in gratitude for Bairam Khan's saving and expanding his kingdom. Bairam Khan fell, but the faction that had inspired his fall could not well expect to step into Bairam Khan's shoes. Though first Maham Anaga and then Munim Khan continued to inspire Akbar's administration, they occupied the position of the power behind the throne. Munim Khan could not issue orders of his own without at least making the pretence of consulting his sovereign. He worked as the Vakil of the emperor rather than as his regent. In the king's absence, in matters brooking no delay he could act as the king, but in the king's presence he took all his orders from him. Of course he was the only channel through which the king's orders passed; through him alone could other public officials gain acces to the king. He remained Akbar's Vakil from 1560 to 1567. During this period, however, Akbar joined Bahadur Khan with him in 1560 and Khwaja Jahan in 1564. Meanwhile Kamal Khan in 1562 and Muzaffar Khan in 1563 had been appointed Diwans and placed in charge of the financial affairs of the government in 1563. Atka Khan had also officiated as the Vakil for some months in 1561-62 superseeding Munim Khan. The Vakil had thus ceased to be the only minister of the crown; we have at times a triumvirate acting together.

Reorganization under Akbar

Soon after this Akbar brought about a reorganization of the government. The Vakil disappeared as an administrative officer; the title was retained as an honorific office. Henceforward the Diwan signed all state documents as the Diwan as well as the Vakil. But his signature as Vakil was an empty formality. Its absence on state documents made no difference to their validity. When after his appointment as Vakil Mir Jumla was sent to the Deccan, Raja Raghunath was appointed Diwan during his absence. He was content to put his signatlre on the state documents as the Diwan alone and refused to sign them in the space provided for the signature of the Vakil. It made no difference to their validity and effectiveness.

The Mughal ministry in Akbar's reorganization came to consist of the Diwan, the Mir Bakhshi, the Khan-i-Saman, and the Sadr as principal heads of the revenue, the military, the public works and industries and the judicial, ecclesiastical and education repartments. This division of work continued throughout the Mughal period. Under the ministers, but having the right of access to the king, were the Mustaufi (the Auditor General), the Superintendents of the Artillery, Elephants and War Boats the Chief Qazi, the Chief Mufti (Legal Adviser) and the Imperial Muhtsib (Censor).

The Diwan

The Diwan was the king's minister *par excellence.* The work of every other minister came under his supervision.

As the keeper of the king's purse he had a say in all matters where any expenditure was to be incurred. All the earning departments were under his control. The Bakhshi, the Khan-i-Saman, and the Sadr spent the revenues the Diwan raised. All the imperial orders were first recorded in his office before being sent. He alone issued orders on behalf of the king and made similar enquiries. Of course the entire revenue administration of the empire was under him. The provincial governors, district fojdars or leaders of expeditions came to him for instructions before proceeding to the assumption of their duties. The settlement of newly conquered territories involved the settlement of their revenues. The Diwan thus played an important part in the consolidation of all newly conquered territories and the success of an imperial conquest very often depended upon the policy he recommended for raising the revenues. The well-being of the peasants depened very often on the grant of remissions in time in bad years, the making of advances for better crops and cultivation of new lands, and the prompt payment of their claims against the government for the crops trampled under foot during the movement of troops. All these questions concerned the Diwan and on his successful and expeditious work the popularity of the government depended. The public servants were interested in the assignment of jagirs in lieu of salary, conversion of cash salaries into jagirs. prompt payment of advances sanctioned for expeditions and other works, sanctioning of new additional salaries or jagirs in case of incremets or prize money. All these problems were solved in the Diwan's office and on their easy and expeditious settlement depended the contentment of the public services. Thus the smooth working of the administrative machinery very often turned on the way the Diwan's office was run. The Mughal emperors were very fortunate in some of their Diwans. Raja Todar Mal, Raja Raghunath, Diwan Sa'adullah Khan. Todar Mal Shah Jahani and Jafar Khan left tradition of public service which became the envy of later ages.

The state records were kept in the Public Record

Office which was a part of his department. All reports of newswriters found room there. All payment orders were first checked in his office and after payment were audited by the Auditor General (Mustaufi) under his control.

All the revenue records of demands, collections, arrears, and remissions were ultimately sent to him through the provincial diwans. The introduction of the *Zabti* in new areas, the consequent survey operation and the changes in revenue assessment from one system to another required his sanction and approval. The posting of provincial diwans and karoris was made at his suggestion as also of all the collectors of customs, and superintendents of various markets. All tax collectors were responsible to him for their work and kept in constant touch with him through the provincial diwans.

All suggestions, recommendations, requests and submissions of the officers of the revenue department either first passed through his hands or were referred to him for his recommendations by the emperor. In the first case he decided what extracts from such papers were to be submitted to the emperor. His advice in these matters was very seldom rejected by the emperor.

He enjoyed easy access to the emperor everywhere. No consultation was complete unless he was present. In the darbar and the Ghusl Khana, in the Khilwat Khana or elsewhere wheseber the emperor discussed administrative problems, his presence was a necessary prelude thereto.

Every morning he assigned commanders to the duty of furnishing a guard to the emperor at court or in the camp.

As his department arranged for the payment of the salaries, all transfers, postings, promotions, retirements, resignations, absences from duty, and dismissals were reported to him and bacame valid only after he had taken notice of them in the proper form. He regulated the movements of the treasury from one province to another, as also from one treasury in the capital to another. He put money at the dispcsal of the treasurer attending the emperor in the court or the camp. He furnished the private treasury of the emperor and could thus put a check on the extravagance of a ruler if he was so minded. He put funds at the disposal of the Khan-i-Saman for roads, buildings. gardens, works of art, purchase of raw material and manufacture of finished articles, thus affecting the development of art and industry in the empire.

All advance and loans were mostly made by him in his own discretion. He decided the arrangements that were made for their recovery.

He did not submit every question arising under him for royal orders. He was granted a large amount of discretionary authority to order his department as he considered fit. All technical questions were decided by him in his own discretion. Unless a change of policy was involved, or one of the parties happened to be very highly placed, he did not trouble the king with his worries. He busied himself in securing the execution of the royal orders and the general policy of the state as best as he could, calling upon the royal reserve of power only when his own had been exhausted. As a Diwan of Shah Jahan put it, the Diwan never said in public what could be submitted by him to the king in private. If his advice thus tendered was not accepted, he could still raise the question officially in public. When a Diwan did not feel like making a suggestion on his own to the king on any question, he could get out of the difficulty by just raising the question when ordinarily he would be asked to make some suggestion of his own. If that was not accepted, he had done his duty.

The imperial Diwans received extravagant salaries. Sa'adullah Khan was a 7000er receiving Rs. 30,00,000 a year on his own and his contingent's account. Dara who about this time occupied the rank of 60,000er and whose sons had higher ranks than Sa'dullah Khan once fell out with him. Shah Jahan strongly reprimanded his son, telling him not to expect such high officers always to say pleasant things but to respect them all the more when they said what they knew was unpalatable to their princely hearers.

The Diwans were very often great and successful military commanders as well. Raja Todar Mal performed spells of military duty during his tenure as Diwan and acquitted himself creditably. Later on as well, several Diwans performed such functions without relinquishing their Diwani. Sometimes appointment to a military command turned out to be an easy method of dismissing a man from his high office and employing him elsewhere.

Akbar had tried Joint Diwans. This was a part of the system whereby he was employing a double set of officers everywhere. It broke down and ultimately he was content with single Diwans. Under his successors, as the work of the department increased the Diwan was given assistants who took from him the burden of routine administration. One of them—Diwan-i- Khalsa—was put in charge of the crownlands, the other—Diwan-i-Tan—looked after the jagirs and the cash salaries. From time to time office instructions were issued assigning certain duties to them but they always performed them under the all-seeing eye of the chief Diwan. Now and then the Diwan-i-Tan or the Diwan-i-Khalsa was allowed to submit papers to the king in the darbar but mostly their papers were submitted through the chief Diwan with his recommendations. There was a Superintendent of Mints as well working dirtctly under the Diwan. He dealt with all the questions arising out of the state's monopoly of minting coins. The purchase of bullion, the maintenance of the fineness and the standard weight. the levying of the customary minting charges were all under his control, though he seems to have taken his orders from his official superior, the Diwan.

Besides attendance on the king in the darbar or elsewhere, the Diwan sat in his own court as well. Here among other things, he decided cases involving titles to land when they were brought to him originally or after their trial elsewhere. Usually great chiefs paying land revenue to the state preferred their titles to be decided in the imperial Diwan's court rather than in the courts of lower diwani officials.

The Diwan had his personal staff. A personal assistant helped him in the discharge of his multifarious duties. A reader read the various public documents sent to him for his perusal. A munshi gave his verbal orders a literary polish.

The Diwan had his seal of office. It was placed on certain types of papers which had to reach him only for record. The letters written by him in accordance with the instructions of the king also bore his seal. It was put on the treasuries in the capital as well. Putting of the seal did not involve exemption from signing the papers. That was a royal privilege.

The Mir Bakhshi

After the Diwan came the Mir Bakhshi. The Mughal emperors never appointed Commanders-in-Chief to be in charge of their entire army. This was not feasible because the Mughal army mainly consisted of the independent contingents of the mansabdars. The Mir Bakhshi was the chief military adviser. He worked as The Paymaster General of the Army and the Inspector-General of the mansabdars' contingents holding annual reviews of troops and troopers. This maintained a high standard of military strength. When the review was complete, he issued a certificate which enabled the mansabdar to draw his salary. He thus maintained a complete rerord of all the mansabdars serving in various capacities at the capital or outside, their ranks, their salaries including special awards, the way in which they drew their salaries, a complete record of their services as well as the result of the annual reviews of their troops and horses. He assigned the mansabdars present at the imperial camp or the capital to guard duty, though the list so prepared had to be sent to the Diwan for final sanction. He recorded all orders of royal displeasure and saw to their enforcement; the titles and cash awards withdrawn, royal presence forbidden, mounting guard on the emperor denied, all found a place in his office. As the Chief of the Staff, he drew up the plans of campaign of various armies in consultation with the commanders and after discussing them with the king. He divided the forces available into smaller commands, put elepahnts, artillery and, where necessary, war boats from the royal stables and stock at the disposal of the commander. He appointed one of the mansabdars accompanying the expedition the bakhshi thereof. The bakhshi with an army acted as the recorder of the expedition as well and kept the Mir Bakhshi informed of its progress. He thus kept himself in touch with progress of military expeditions, advising the king when reinforcements were necessary or when the smouldering jealousies of rival commanders in an expedition rendered the recall or transfer of one of them necessary. He was usually the king's chief adviser in recommending honours. increments and awards following a successful campaign. The Mughal soldiers usually bought their own horses; when horses got killed in an expedition. the recommendation of the local commander for supplying horses at the cost of the state passed through his hands for imperial sanction.

He was the nerve centre of the administration. All the news-writers outside the capital were his agents. The provincial bakhshi was the newswriter-in-chief for his province. His reports passed through the hands of the Mir Bakhshi at the capital who thus had his fingers on the pulse of the whole empire. This made his work very important. The provincial bakhshi's report usually was a review of the work of all the mansabdars in the province besides containing other material of interest to the emperor. The Mir Bakhshi was thus in a position to pass judgement on the work of all public servants working outside the capital. It suited all the mansabdars stationed in the mofussil to keep on the right side of the Mir Bakhshi.

At the capital, the Mir Bakhshi had several departmental heads under him. The Superintendents of Artillery, Elephants and War-boats were placed immediately under him. There was a separate bakhshi of gentlemen-troopers, the Ahadis. The servants serving in the various stables and other imperial establishments connected with the army had another bakhshi at their head—Bakhshi-i-Shagird

Pesha—to manage their affairs. These two bakhshis served as inspectors of the personnel and paymasters of the establishments placed under their control. Through the Mir Bakhshi, the two bakhshis and the three superintendents arranged for the imperial review of troopers, stables, elephants and horses.

The Mir Bakhshi's position was sometimes eclipsed on account of the presence of the emperor at the head of an expedition. Even then, the Mir Pakhshi accompanied the king on the battle-field and served as one of his chief advisers.

As the work of the department grew, the Mir Bakhshi got three assistants, called the second, the third and the fourth bakhshis. They relieved him of some of the departmental work at the capital. At first the duty of delegating some of his duties to them was left to the Mir Bakhshi; later on there was a territorial division of work, the Mir Bakhshi retaining the tower of general supervision over them all. He continued to be the military adviser of the emperor. Requests of the military commanders sent directly to the emperor were referred to him for report and sometimes even for disposal.

The Mir Bakhshi had his own separate office where he did his departmental work. As in the case of the Diwan he was supplied the usual number of assistants; a reader, a personal assistant and a munshi helped him in the discharge of his duties.

The Khan-i-Saman

The Khan-i-Saman was the third secular minister. In theory he was an under-minister only, being technically under the Diwan. In actual practice, however, he had independent access to the emperor and was usually allotted lump-sum grants which he distributed as he thought fit. He represented his own requiremests himself to the emperor in the court.

He was the minister in charge of the household department, royal buildings, roads, gardens, purchases, stores and workhops. He thus performed the duties of a modern minister for public works. trade, industry and agriculture, besides acting as the controller of the royal household.

As the controller of the royal household, he saw to the provision of every article needed by the emperor —in the capital or on the move, in camp or in the provinces— and the princesses living at the capital or with the emperor. Besides meeting day-to-day needs of the emperor, the Khan-i-Saman had to provide the gifts the emperor made to his mansabdars, princes, princesses, foreign ambassadors. men of letters and others. Similarly all the presents made to the emperor were lodged in one of the treasuries or stores under the Khan i-Saman. He had to supply the robes of office and of honour for official use when needed. He had to employ circumspection worthy of a great merchant-prince for this purpose. He must never be found short of articles the emperor's fancy may any day demand.

As the minister for trade and industry, he employed quite a large number of agents and workmen. He appointed, dismissed, posted, promoted and demoted the superintendents, store-keepers and accountants, and sanctioned assistants in all the stores, workshops and purchasing agencies. He laid down the general rules for work in various employment agencies under the state for this purpose. He got securities from the superintendents of various workshops and, where necessary, got similar bonds executed by skilled artisans as well. He fixed the strength, in men and officers, of every department under him. He made all purchases on behalf of the state and was responsible for running the state monopolies of salt, elephants, jewels, and such other articles as the emperor may decree. He carried out the sale of Mughal goods in foreign markets and arranged for the necessary transport over land and water for the purpose.

As the minister in charge of roads and buildings, he secured the materials needed for the building plans of the emperor. His agents kept the roads travel-worthy, particularly when the emperor was likely to use them.

When the king travelled. officers and men of his department moved in advance, selected the place for the royal camp and fixed it a day ahead of the royal occupation. He allotted royal buildings to public servants and issued temporary permits for their occupation by them. He realized the rent from royal shops leased to merchants and state buildings used as residential houses.

As the minister of agriculture he was mostly concerned with the royal gardens. These included both vegetable and fruit gardens. He realized the royal demands from the lessees when they were leased to others and looked after them. The royal table always needed fruits. He arranged for their supply to the four corners of the empire wherever the emperor may be.

His department was entrusted with the duty of taking possession of the property of the deceased public servants immediately on their death. His agents prepared inventories of the effects found, evaluated them and sent their reports to him for such further action as was necessary.

He was in charge of the cattle in the royal cattle farms so far as their provisions were concerned. His agents carried out experiments in the amount of food which was necessary in order to keep them in a fit condition so far as it depended on the fodder and corn that was supplied to them.

The Khan-i-Saman had his representatives in the provinces known as Diwan-i-Bayutat. They were in immediate charge of the stores and workshops in the provinces. looked after roads and buildings, collected the rent and income from gardens, took charge of escheated properties. fixed the prices of the articles manufactured in the workshops under their control, estimated the value of the articles purchased abroad or in India, made payments to the labour engaged in various stores and workshops and kept daily accounts of receipts, expenditure and balances of every store and workshop. There was a local Diwan-i-Bayutat at the capital as well who performed the functions his provincial colleagues performed elsewhere. They all worked under the supervision of the Khan-i-Saman and were his assistants. The demands of the departments as such were presented to the emperor by the Khan-i-Saman though where the emperor's personal taste or comfort was concerned the superintendent of the department could ask for direct orders of the king.

The office organization of the Khan-i-Saman resembled the Diwan's. Sometimes the Khan-i-Saman tried to do his work in his house. Aurangzeb. however, issued orders that this should not be permitted and that the Khan-i-Saman should do his work in his office in the forenoon.

The Sadr

Sometimes very near the king's person, but administratively outside the king's servants, was the Sadr. Associated with him there were a Chief Qazi and a Legal Remembrancer (the Mufti) and under him worked the Chief Muhtsib (Censor) and the imperial collector of the jizya at the capital, and qazis, muhtsibs, collectors of the jizya and sadrs in the provinces. He had his personal assistant, reader, news-writer and superintendent of the court. Theoretically most sadrs and their associates and subordinate officers were not the king's servants. They were not bound to his chariot wheels. He paid them out of his funds for charity. For one thing, to evaluate the learning or piety of a scholar in cash was insulting to him and his calling: the state only paid them enough money for maintenance.

This pretence, however. ill accorded with practice. The Sadr was the Chief Justice, Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs, Minister for Education and Royal Almoner all rolled into one. But in the judicial department he functioned more as the Chief Qazi than as the Sadr. In Aurangzeb's reign separate Chief Qazis and Sadrs were appointed. But it seems under his predecessors the Sadr very often functioned as both. There were in fact two separate offices. which were usually combined in the person of the Sadr. As the Chief Justice he held his own court. but as we shall find below, his court did not exercise the appellate functions vested in the highest court of appeal in a modern state today. He could not revise, modify, or reject, on grounds of defective judgement in ascertaining facts or interpreting the law, any judgement of other courts. He was, however. the administrative head of the judiciary; he appointed all of them as the Sadr. he assigned them allowances when they were not granted mansabs; he entertained complaints against them for their failure in administering justice or being corrupt and dishonest.

The Sadr seems to have very often functioned as the Grand Mufti of the empire as well. Under Akbar and again under Aurangzeb sometimes we find different persons holding the offices of the Grand Mufti and the Sadr, but usually the two offices seem to have been merged into one. The duty of the Grand Mufti was to declare the law in complicated cases. He could be invited to give his opinion by a qazi trying a case, or he could be asked to assist secular judges including the king. We have no case on record where a Mufti was so consulted by either. The office, when held by some one else than a Sadr, seems to have been a sinecure conferred on a Qazi of distinction administering justice.

The Sadr's main duty was patronage of learning, piety and scholarship. It is alleged that Akbar's first Sadr exercised unlimited power of making grants. He is said to have made very large grants totalling in all more than the (current?) grants of the earlier rulers. But Akbar held several inquiries into the existing arrangements and as a result thereof curtailed the powers of the Sadr in making grants and cut down the grants already made. The existence of one Sadr for the whole empire placed too great a power of patronage in his hands. Even Badayuni's orthodoxy could not stomach all that the existing holders of the office did. Akbar appointed provincial sadrs besides the imperial Sadr. This curtailed the power of the Chief Sadr in that recommendations for making grants did not always originate with him. Akbar seems to have made it necessary for his later Sadrs to take his orders in making grants. Under Jahangir this system continued. It has been suggested that as Jahangir makes mention only of his own awards in his *Memoirs* after his fifth year, no lands were presumably granted by the Sadr thereafter. But Jahangir makes mention of the cash or land given by him with his own hands or in his presence. It does not mean that elsewhere grants were not being made. Even in the working of this system, the Sadr played his part. In describing his visit to Gujarat in the ninth year, Jahangir tells us that he had asked the Sadr (and others) to recommend persons deserving help. Describing his grants in the fourteenth year, Jahangir does not mention his Sadr, but his description does not exclude the grants of land being made through the Sadr. All the grants could be made in form and in theory only by the king, but it did not imply that he always acted on his own in making these grants. Jahangir could well take credit for his charity without its involving the Sadr's being put on the cold shelf. The sadrs and the other officers under them were usually stipendiaries under Akbar. But Akbar gave his last Sadr a mansab. Once that tradition began, the Sadrs forgot their theoretical independence and were content to remain mansabdars. Shah Jahan's Sadr, Sayyid Jalal. was a 6,000er. Naturally where the chiefs led, their subordinates followed. Many qazis and ecclesiastical servants who used to receive land grants at first received mansabs under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb and thus the amount of grants made by the Sadrs as *madid-i-muash* decreased. Of course the mansabs which the qazis and other such officers enjoyed were given on the advice of the Sadr and hence his patronage in these two reigns cannot be measured by the *madid-i-muash* lands given by him alone.

The Sadrs were consulted by the emperor when he gave cash in charity as well. We have seen Jahangir mentioning the Sadr as one of those who recommended needy persons to him. The large amount of cash set apart as the equivalent of the commodities against which the emperor used to be weighed was given away in charity during the course of the year and must have been expended mainly on the advice of the Sadr, as also was the money set aside for charity on other occasions.

The Mughal emperors made grants in cash or land to Hindu scholars and teachers as well. Who originally recommended them? It is difficult to be sure, though grants to them as well must have formally passed through the hands of the Sadr. Lahauri mentions two Sanskrit writers from Tarhat being presented before Shah Jahan by Zamin-ud-Daulah when they were given Rs. 1,000 each and robes of honour.

We find Aurangzeb personally examining in theology and law candidates for grants in the open court and giving them grants thereafter. But they were usually cases of small stipends.

The Sadr had an office organization like other heads of departments.

The Muhtsib

The Muhtsib was both an ecclesiastical and a secular officer. As secular officer he examined weights and measures and saw to it that fair prices prevailed in the market. He recovered debts and traced and handed over to their owners fugitive slaves. He also secured cleanliness in the cities, and preserved public streets or markets from being built upon. Under Aurangzeb his ecclesiastical functions predominated. though he performed certain borderland functions as well. Putting down the public sale of intoxicants, wine, bhang, tari (toddy), and protecting sexual morality by preventing prostitutes from plying their profession openly in the cities and preventing gambling may be considered as his borderland functions. Besides this he had to secure the observance of the punitive law against the Hindus as promulgated by Aurangzeb. Putting down of public worship by the Hindus, closing down of some of their shrines, the enforcement of sartorial regulations, prevention of the celebration of Dipavali and Holi and pulling down newly erected temples were thus some of his duties. He reported cases of apostasy and blasphemy and secured punishment of the accused. So far as the Muslims were concerned, he had to secure the observance of the Muslim way of life as understood and ordained by

Aurangzeb. The old lawyers had defined his duties as the enforcement of the law with regard to the things unlawful and forbidden. As Aurangzeb's list of forbidden things grew. the importance of the Muhtsib's office increased. He put down music, prevented the lighting of lamps on Muslim tombs and shrines on Thursdays, forbade the sale of toys representing animate beings, hindered the flaunting of beards of uncanonical length and shape, and enforced sartorial regulations. He prevented the public non-observance of the fast during the month of Ramazan. At prayer times he sent all Muslims to pray in the nearby mosques. It was his duty to report heresy and non-conformity and secure proper punishment for the same.

The News-Writers

We have referred to news-writers here and there. They were all appointed by the king through the Mir Bakhshi. The king considered them as his own eyes and ears and the functioning of the department furnishes interesting sidelight on the administration. They usually held office for five years. If any newswriter made a report against a high mansabdar and on investigation it proved untrue, he was severely punished. A news-writer's head was cut off for a false report against Jaswant Singh. But corrput news-writers were the rule rather than the exception. We have Jai Singh's agents at court advising him to square the local news-writer in Aurangzeb's reign on the one hand and the complaint of a garrison commander that the news-writer was demanding Rs. 1,100 a year from him as hush money on the other. They were required to write their reports themselves so that they be kept confidential. They were strictly forbidden from reporting news on hearsay only. The reports were expected to be sent every week. Most of their reports were like weekly returns submitted by various officers today. This explains the presence of the reporters in most departments of the State. They kept their superiors informed about the progress of work in the offices they were assigned to.

We have several titles used in order to describe their activities. Besides the usual title Waqai Nigar or Waqai Navis, we have Savanih Nigar, Parcha Navis. Jasus. and Khufia Navis; whether all these titles indicated separate officers it is difficult to say. In May 1704 a Savanih Nigar was promoted Waqai-Navis. This implies the existence of two separate cadres. The Khufia Navis (secret agents) must have formed a separate class.

The Darogha-i-Dak Choki

The Darogha-i-Dak Choki ran the imperial post. His agents were everywhere. At every stage, a horse was kept ready for use by his messengers. They brought news in all ways—on foot and on horse, by rivers or over the mountains.

Office organization

The internal organization of the various departments was very much like what it is today. There were daroghas immediately under the Minister probably in charge of various sections of the departments. Deputy daroghs and assistant daroghs are also mentioned along with joint daroghas. Under the daroghas there were mushrifs. Most of the departments had reporters and accountants of their own. We have already mentioned the reader and the personal assistant and the writer of the ministers. There was usually a Nazir (store-keeper and record-keeper) and an amin in every department. The heads of departments had their seals. Even when they were used, the departmental heads had to sign the papers themselves. They were the seals of office whereas the signatures bound down the officers to the opinions expressed and the orders given.

CHAPTER V

PUBLIC FINANCE (RECEIPTS)

Sources of Revenue

The Mughal emperors exploited several sources of revenue. They levied direct taxes on income and persons, professions and property. They made money by extensive commercial undertakings of various kinds. They raised substantial sums by indirect taxes such as custom duty, transit dues, octroi, sales tax, and the excise duties on manufacture. Administration of justice brought in a small sum in fines and judicial fees. The emperor was the heir to all property without proper title, and salvagings from shipwrecks were his. Registration fee was paid when some transactions were recorded or certain ceremonies performed. The emperors received presents from their officers and subjects as also from foreign rulers sending embassies to India. War often became a source of income—indemnity was sometimes levied besides income from plunder. Under Babur and Humayun and again under Aurangzeb certain burdens were shouldered by non-Muslims which can best be described as taxes on religion.

It is well to remember that there was always a difference between what the citizens paid and the amounts credited to the treasury. Many officials levied charges which were not credited to the State: some of these formed customary authorized methods whereby they were allowed to supplement their salaries, other were not only unauthorized but were from time to time forbidden by the emperors. The first should undoubtedly be included among taxes whereas the second class can only be termed exaction. But both formed the burden the people had to bear.

Direct Taxes

Among the direct taxes on income, the land revenue figures most. It was the main source of income of the Mughal government and deserves separate study. We will deal with it in the next chapter. The deductions from the salaries of the mansabdars which seem to have been always made formed a tax on income just as much as the income tax deducted from the salaries of public servants does today. The Mughal practice differed from the modern practice in laying down the uses to which the deductions made were put and in specifying the services for which they were charged. But they remained essentially a tax on income amounting to from about 10 to 25 per cent of the salaries paid. The exact sum thus 'collected' cannot be estimated precisely. The tributes paid by feudatory princes in Gujarat, the Deccan, or elsewhere can best be described as a tax on their income. But most of the feudatories paid no tribute. They placed a contingent of their troops paid by them at the disposal of the imperial government. Like the tribute, it should also be considered a tax on the income of the princes equivalent in money to what the Mughal government would have paid had it maintained these troops at its own cost. These contingents differed from the Imperial Service Troops which the Indian States used to place at the disposal of the British Government in India in an emergency. The Mughal practice was a regular burden while the modern institution was an occasional charge. Forced labour exated from skilled and unskilled labourers at less than market rates also formed a |tax on the income of the labourers. A capitation tax seems to have been levied from time to time. Licence fees for permission to practise certain trades or professions were charged and also a profession tax from persons following certain professions. Pressing of sugarcane and finishing of cotton cloth do not seem to have provided steady employment to their votaries. They went from place to place and paid a licence fee of Rs. 1½ wherever they started business anew. A profession tax was paid by most classes of artisans; carpenters, weavers, printers of cotton cloth, dancing girls, brokers, millers, pedlars and hawkers, fishermen, boatmen and singers are found paying the tax from time to time. Akbar abolished the tax on some of the professions, Aurangzeb did the same. But it is certain that it continued being levied on some professions during the Mughal period. The grazing tax and the tax on cattle also formed direct taxes of which the burden could not be shifted by those paying them to the consumers of their services.

Indirect Taxes

Indirect taxes took many forms. The most important were the custom duties levied on the import and export of goods at places of entry on the land or the sea frontier. Surat. Lahri Bundar, Puri and Balasor formed the four customs posts in Gujarat, Sindh, Orissa and Bengal. Goods entering the country from Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and the countries beyond paid customs dues at Gorakhpur (now in the Uttar Pradesh). Trade from and to Qandahar paid the duties at Multan. Goods from Central Asia passing through Kabul paid duties on crossing the river Indus, but goods imported through Kashmir and Kullu must have paid customs duties at Srinagar or Bajwara (near Hoshiarpur in the Punjab).

The usual rate was 2½ per cent of the estimated value at the place where it was paid, Cost of conveyance was added to the sale price paid at the locality where the articles were originally bought. A brokerage of I per cent charged on the goods imported or exported by European merchants raised the custom duties in their case to 3½ per cent, rising to 4 per cent in Bengal. Some time about the year 1662 the English succeeded in paying a lump sum duty of Rs. 3.000 a year on their imports and exports together. This continued for about 20 years. when 3½ per cent *ad valorem* duty was reimposed, to remain in force for another ten years. About 1692 they again succeeded in compounding at the old figure of Rs. 3,000. The rates for European traders otherwise varied between

2 and 5 per cent. Treasure and imports were charged at a lower rate than exports. In 1665 Aurangzeb introduced religious discrimination by charging 5 per cent on goods imported and exported by the Hindus and 2½ per cent on those by the Muslims. Not content with this, he remitted the customs duties on the Muslims in 1668. The duties paid by the Hindus were kept at five per cent. Sometime about 1672 this was found unworkable—Muslim traders imported and exported the goods belonging to Hindu traders free. charging a 'consideration' for their services. This probably led to the reduction of the duty on the Hindus to 2½ per cent. But in 1680 the duties on the Muslims were again imposed at 2½ per cent and raised on the goods of the Hindu merchants to 5 per cent.

This was the general rate. On certain goods, *e.g.* Persian horses imported in very large numbers, and musk and rhubarb, the duty amounted to 25 per cent. Goods from Muskat paid 10 per cent.

Even though the rate was generally as low as 2½ per cent, smuggling was not unknown. An elaborate staff seems to have been maintained. Strict search of persons and goods was carried out at the customs. Smugglers caught redhanded were whipped on the spot and were made to pay large amounts in fines.

Duties on goods in transit took various forms. *Rahdari* seems to have originated as a payment for service; even though the service performed was refraining from robbing the caravans passing through a particular area where the party levying the tax was very influential. Often forbidden, it yet continued being levied throughout the Mughal period. In 1704 we find it levied under imperial authority. The nature of this tax can be understood from a statement in a newsletter of June 1695 that *Rahdari* was charged at every stage in the sarkar of Mathura. This seems to have been customary. The amount charged does not seem to have been very large. Between Agra and the Deccan a merchant paid Rs. 350 in all on all his merchandise in 1688. But Talish mentions an occasion when a famine followed in Dacca in the wake of the high rate of *Rahdari* levied. Abul Fazl records that the total amount paid in *Rahdari* sometimes amounted to twice the original price of the article. It is probable that he includes all charges on merchandise in this statement. The English Factory records mention a payment of Rs. 2,500 on 230 camel loads of merchandise between Agra and Surat. Sometimes rates per camel, per cart, or per head are mentioned; on other occasions *ad valorem* charges are made and on still other occasions the charge is levied by weight.

Chungi or octroi was levied in the cities through which the goods passed during their transit. Sher Shah abolished this duty but it persisted throughout the Mughal period. It was collected by the agents of the Diwan or of the fojdar and seems to have amounted to a large sum. Annual receipts from one parganah are said to have amounted to Rs. 400. At this rate the total collections should have amounted to about Rs. 2,00.000. But we find Aurangzeb complaining that the amount credited to the treasury was about one-eighth of the total collections. As octroi it persists to this day. An excise duty on manufacture was levied on glass, soap, leather, felt, indigo, wine, sugar. lac, hemp, lime, oil, ghee. tobacco. wool, intoxicants and meat during the period. Its incidence could sometimes rise to 10 per cent.

The sales tax takes its place with the customs duties as one of the two important indirect taxes in the Mughal empire. In the cities markets for the sale of goods were fixed; sometimes separate places were set aside for the sale of certain classes of goods. Only the first sale of goods was taxed, unless an article remained with its owner for more than a year. Sales below Rs. 55 were exempted from payment of the tax. This probably resulted in many goods sold by importers or manufacturers directly to the consumers going tax free. All articles valued above Rs. 55 must have paid the tax. Payments of the tax on the sale of yarn, cloth, indigo, dye stuffs, provisions , salt, ginger, betel leaves. dairy products, pottery, utensils, glass, crockery, wood work, leather goods, bricks, houses, saltpetre, arms and armour, books, horses, ivory, precious metals and precious stones. carpets and shawls are mentioned in the contemporary records. The charge collected in kind by local officials on the entry of grass and wood loads need never have been credited to the state. There was no exemption granted in this case; it was not levied at the time of sale. The rate varied from ½ to 5 per cent on Hindus and ½ to 2½ per cent on Muslims under Aurangzeb. We are afforded a glimpse into the amount that must have been raised by this tax in the figures for Gujarat preserved in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*. The Muqaddam of Ahmedabad charged with the duty of fixing fair prices for cotton cloth charged ¾ per cent for his services and paid Rs. 1,000 to the state as a tax on his income. The tax on the sales of silver here amounted to Rs. 1,54.362½ and that on jewels, ivory and fancy goods to Rs. 2,500.,At Surat the tax raised from the cotton market and the mint amounted to Rs. 3,75,000. It is certain that the total amount raised every year by this tax must have run into several lakhs of rupees.

State Undertakings

The Mughal emperors were great manufacturers and businessmen. In the royal workshop many articles were manufactured both for consumption by the state and for sale to private buyers. It produced its own arms and ammunition, carriages and portable litters for the emperor, carpets, mattresses, harnesses for the horses in the imperial stable, beds, tents, clothes, jewellery, gold and silverware, perfumes, medicines, shawls, turbans and articles of iron, copper and other metals. The manufactured articles when issued to various departments of the state were charged at market rates. The profits must have been shown as the income from the karkhanahs. The profits on working the monopoly in salt, betel leaves, diamond mines, saltpetre, beeswax, intoxicants from *tari,* elephants. and lead must have brought quite a large amount to the state treasury. Manrique calculated the income from the sale of betel leaves at Dacca alone at Rs. 4,000 daily.

The Ahmedabad market yielded an income of Rs. 28,500 on betel leaves. The income from *tari* intoxicants was 12,000 *mahmudis* at Surat and 1,900 huns at Hyderabad. The state charged ground rent on projections occupied by shopkeepers, it levied interest on the advances made to the officials; it sold a part of the produce from the state gardens; it ran ferry services of its own on river crossings at a decent pofit and it carried on foregin trade through its own agents with Arabia, Persia, Ethiopia. and the East Indies. The royal mint charged 5 per cent as minting charge besides the wages of the workmen actully engaged in the operation. At Surat this brought Rs. 11,00,000 a year under Aurangzeb. A fee was charged for stamping weights and measures. Rent from shop sites brought Rs. 47,750 at Ahmedabad.

War Gains

War yielded some income to the state to compensate it for the money spent on it. The defeated princes were compelled to pay indemnity; the plunder of enemy territory was organized either for living on the enemy or for frightening the inhabitants; presents were sometimes forced in kind from a defeated enemy. As the Mughal kingdom of the Punjab under Humayun was converted into the empire embracing almost the whole of India. income from this source must have declined. But there were still rebels to be put down and treated like enemies during the process. A sum of Rs. 1,00,000 is mentioned as having been once charged as war indemnity.

Escheated Properties

The emperor was the heir to all property for which no claimants were forthcoming. Goods washed ashore or salvaged from shipwreck also were his.

Nazars

Presents formed a very substantial source of income. Sent by foreign princes with their embassies or by independent Indian rulers seeking to avert royal hunger for more land, presented in person or through court agents by public servants anxious to obtain royal favour. they formed a regular source of considerable income. Public servants had to offer presents to the emperor on the New Year Day, the royal birthday, the anniversary of the royal accession to power and the Id, besides at their admission to or promotions in the public service. Officers returning from the provinces. merchants on admission to the court, high officials proceeding to the assumption of their office, European marchants seeking favour, all brought suitable offerings. Money, precious stones, curiosities, rare articles of foreign manufacture, exquisite works of Indian workmen, hunting birds, beautiful books and paintings, animals of good breed—in fact anything that was likely to prove acceptable to the emperor—were all offered as presents according to the purse and the status of the person concerned. No limits could be placed to their value. As much as Rs. 78,00,000 is recorded to have been once given by a public servant. Though this was rare, presents worth Rs. 34.00.000 and Rs. 20,00,000 are known to have been made on other occasions. A golden throne was once offered to Aurangzeb. These presents are extraordinary. But the sixteenth anniversary of his accession brought Aurangzeb Rs. 50,00,000 worth of presents. This may have been their usual annual value in his reign. Jahangir's presents on a similar occasion amounted to Rs. 10,50,000, forty-five horses and nine elephants. Inviting the emperor to lunch or dinner was an occasion for making presents which sometimes went beyond ten lakhs in value. Presents were offered on all happy occasions—happy for the emperor or the dignitaries who made them.

The Mughal emperors received embassies from Balkh, Bokhara, Turkey, Badakhshan, Kashgar. Iran, Turan, Mecca and several other Arab principalities. In India before their submission most of the independent rulers cajoled the emperor by their embassies. Bijapur and Golkonda were regularly milched in this way. Ahmednagar, Orissa. Khandesh, Gujarat, Thatta. Malabar and Kashmir thus kept the emperors in good temper. All ambassadors brought rich presents. Poor present were liable to be returned and to bring dishonour to the ambassador and his master.

Fees, Fines, etc.

Judicial fees and fines must have brought a considerable sum of money. One-fourth of the debt recovered or the stolen property traced was retained by the state till Aurangzeb remitted the charge. Fees were paid for serving summons on parties or witnesses. Under-trial prisoners, and somtimes both the parties to a suit, were charged their maintenance fees while they were kept in prison. But the most important source of income lay in the fines on public servants for their negligence, remissness in performing their duties, oppression, failure to carry out imperial orders and breach of official etiquette in the Darbar, the Ghusl Khana or elsewhere. Aurangzed mentions a fine of Rs. 1,000 levied on an afficial by Shah Jahan for reprehensive conduct in the Ghusl Khana. Heavy fines were also imposed on officials failing to protect trade or persons passing through their charges. Smugglers, utterers of false coins, highwaymen, pirates, and foreigners erecting stone houses without permission and those guilty of obstructing defence works were also fined heavily. Confiscation of the property of guilty persons by the state may have brought some money.

Akbar instituted the custom of registering marriages, probably among the Muslims. A registration fee was charged for this, varying from one *dam* to ten *mohars* according to the status of the person marrying. Other judicial documents were occasionally stamped for verification and *sirmohari* paid. The qazi acted as the registrar. It is doubtful whether any part of the fees collected by him was credited to the State.

Taxes on Religion

Then there are the taxes charged by Babur, Humayun and Aurangzeb from their non-Muslim subjects. Babur and Humayun levied the jizya on all adult non-Muslims who possessed some property. There were three rates prevalent, 125 dams from the poorest classes of the people, 250 dams from the middle class and 500 dams from the rest. Akbar remitted the tax in 1563. Aurangzeb reimposed it in 1679. In Gujarat it was expected to form 4 per cent of the total revenue. This would probably hold good for the rest of the empire as well. Thus the total collections from this source would amount to Rs. 1,54,72,600.

The pilgrimage tax was levied on the Hindus not only when they visited their famous places of pilgrimage but at the time of local religious fairs and festivities. The usual rate seems to have been Rs. 6¼ per head. European visitors mention gatherings of as many as half a million men at Hardwar and other such places probably at the time of the *Kumbh*. The state must have netted quite a large amount on such occasions. Akbar discontinued the tax in 1563. Shah Jahan reintroduced it but was prevailed upon to give it up when a deputation of Hindu scholars prayed for its abolition. Aurangzeb's Persian annals are silent about it. Unnlike the jizya, the pilgrimage tax had originated in India and was not considered lawful by the theologians. He may not have formally revived it. But European writers claim that it was being levied in his reign.

European travellers speak of rich Hindus of Gujarat agreeing to pay one lakh of rupees a year for permission to keep their temples open under Aurangzab. Manrique suggests that under Shah Jahan killing of animals considered sacred by the Hindus was prohibited and that the Hindus paid heavily for this concession. Roe mentions the same thing under Jahangir.

Hindu women intending to burn themselves with their dead husbands paid a tax—as much as Rs. 200 sometimes—before they were granted permission.

Total Revenue

Several estimates have been made of the total revenue of the Mughal empire. Abul Fazl estimated Akbar's revenues at Rs. 13,21,36,831 and 12,00,000 betel leaves.

Abdul Hamid Lahori estimated Shah Jahan's income at Rs. 22,50,00,000; Sujan Rai put Aurangzeb's revenues at Rs. 38,68,16,584 in the first decade of his reign. Later writers seem to have copied his figures though it is certain that after the introduction of the jizya Aurangzeb's income must have increased by 4 per cent of the total in Sujan Rai's days. But these figures were theoretical only. They included at least the land revenue raised by the feudatory princes in their states. What the Mughal emperors actually received cannot be estimated accurately. But this sum—huge by the standards of those days and equivalent to about Rs. 3,09,45,32,472 in its purhasing power today—did not represent the total receipts of the Mughal emperors. It excluded all presents received by the emperors, tributes paid by feudatory princes of various grades, the savings represented by the employment of the contingents of feudatory princes, probably income from the jizya and the pilgrimage tax, judicial fines and fees, war indemnities paid by the vanquished rulers, and savings in expenditure by deductions from the salaries of public servants and by employing forced labour paid lower than their usual wages. It would be nearer the truth to say that the above total included land revenue, customs, and probably sales tax also. When Aurangzeb issued an order remitting certain taxes, it has been asserted that this involved a decrease of Rs. 12,00,000 a year in the jagir of Shaista Khan in Bengal. If Talish is correct in making this statement the total income from the taxes which were remitted must have been several crores. If we take all these items into consideration we should have to increase the total very considerably. No wonder the Mughal emperors were considered the richest rulers of their times in the world. Pelsaert has given us a list of treasure Akbar left at his death. Keeping in mind the fact that Akbar succeeeded to an almost empty treasury in 1556, this list represents the surpluses of the Mughal empire over a period of 50 years. It forms a remarkable achievement in managing the finances of the Mughal empire to leave Rs. 35,00,00,000 in cash, bullion and jewels.

Shah Jahan's partisans complain that Jahangir dissipated not only the ordinary financial resources of the empire but this huge accumulation of wealth as well. Whether Jahangir or his successors did as well as Akbar is dobutful. Aurangzeb in the Deccan is several times discovered in sore straits for money. But it is remarkable that he was always able to advance money from his private treasury to tide over his public difficulties. No later inventory has come down to us though European travellers provide us with ocasional glimpses into the wealth of the Mughal emperors. It can, however, be asserted that later Mughal emperors did not husband their resources as well as did Akbar and that they spent considerably large sume on themselves and their families.

As the foregoing description shows, the Mughals cast their financial net very widely over their entire population. No class of their subjects escaped contributing to their treasury. The poorest classes always paid the salt tax; the artisans paid the professional tax if not the licence fees; cultivators paid the land revenues; the Hindus paid the jizya from 1526 to 1563 and again from 1679 to 1707. The customs and transit duties were also passed on to their customers by the merchants. It is difficult to be sure about incidence of the sales tax. It is likely that it had to be paid by the big merchants out of their own income. For one thing, smaller transactions were free; the consumers could thus buy tax-free goods; for another, goods retained unsold for more than a year became liable to tax again. Both these provisions were likely to make the big merchants pay the sales tax themselves. The upper class officials had not only deductions from their salaries made but had to make customary presents to the emperor. These must have represented a running drain on their income. Considering their resources, the poorest classes seem to have been taxed most; indeed when the jizya was in force it would have been impossible for the cultivators to build up any reserves against evil days, and a famine always found them helpless—as it did in Gujarat in 1627-30.

CHAPTER VI

PUBLIC FINANCE: ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION OF THE LAND REVENUE

Earlier Methods

Humayun returned to India in 1555, defeated Sikandar Sur and soon became the master of the Punjab and the Doab. At Delhi, one of the most important changes which he must have noticed in the method of administration concerned the assessment of the land revenue. As the *Ain* has it, Sher Shah gave up 'sharing' and introduced 'measurement' as the basis of asseessment.[1] Sher Shah could not introduce measurement everywhere and thus 'sharing' the crops had not everywhere been abandoned as the method of assessment of the land revenue.

Sher Shah seems to have adopted a simple method of assessment. Some areas probably near the capital were selected, where the produce of one bigha of good, middling and bad land under each crop was ascertained. The average of the produce of three kinds was taken and constituted the normal produce per bigha of every crop. The state demanded one third of this average produce and thus a set of rates of assessment per bigha of different crops was prepared.[2]

Every season, then, in the areas where this system prevailed, the surveyors went to the villages, surveyed the area under cultivation, collected the details of every crop and fixed the state demand in kind. The cultivator paid a little more than one-third of his produce.

This was probably the method which Humayun found in vogue in certain parts of his newly acquired dominions and which he did not like to change. Akbar found this method customary in certain areas.[3] The *Ain* has preserved statistics that prove that Akbar took these rates for granted and concerned himself with the task of translating grain rates into cash rates. For this purpose he made several experiments.

Akbar's Early Experiments

Beginning with the sixth year, prices of various crops prevailing in different parts of the empire were called for every season and an average was struck. With the help of the average price obtained in this way, the existing schedule of land revenue demands in kind was converted into a cash schedule and enforced all over the empire.[5] This system remained in force for four years. But the rates adopted for conversion proved very high; the cash schedule therefore did not prove very tempting to the cultivators. In rural areas away from large cities where lower prices usually prevailed, the new rate was all the more unjust to the cultivators. They were saved by the fact that they could, if they preferred, always pay in kind. They did so and this first experiment in charging land revenue in cash broke down..[6]

In the tenth year, the prices called for every season were grouped unit-wise and an average price for various commodities was thus obtained. This was used for the purpose of preparing a cash schedule of demands for various crops per cultivated bigha. Whether there was a general depression in the market or the revenue officials proved more considerate, the new schedule of demands now prepared was much lower than the previous one. Whereas ninety *dams* had been charged for one bigha of wheat earlier, the usual rate now varied between 50 and 64 *dams* per bigha. This system continued for three years.[7]

It should be borne in mind that the empire had not yet been divided into provinces. The earlier smaller units of administration still prevailed. But when the *Ain* was compiled later on all the statistics were made to fit into the provincial division of the empire. Thus the schedules of land revenue demands were compressed into one schedule in order to record what is described in the *Ain* as a provincial schedule. say for the province of Agra. For some crops the rates in the several units that later were joined together to form the province of Agra seem to have been the same. But for other crops the demand differed from unit to unit. This has been summarized by recording that wheat was assessed in the province of Agra in the tenth year at 50 to 60 *dams* a bigha; there mere several rates current, but none of them was lower than 50 *dams* or higher than 60.[8]

In the thirteenth year, Shihab-ud-Din, the new Diwan, thought that enough material had been gathered to enable him to give up this cumbersome method of seasonal surveys and assessment. Taking the actual revenue paid by the cultivators for several years past, he struck an annual average and fixed the demand for every cultivator at that.[9] If there was marked change in the condition of the land due to improvements brought about by the cultivators or the state, this was also taken into account in fixing the land revenue. The state demand thus fixed was supposed to be a permanent assessment. It did away with the necessity of seasonal surveys and records. it did not involve any operations for the conversion of the demand in kind into demand in cash.[10]

Taqsim-ul-Mulk

In the fifteenth year another change was introduced. Qanungos of every parganah (?) were ordered to prepare a *Taqsim-ul-Mulk* for the area concerned and send it to the Secretariat. There in the Ministry of Revenue, by estimate (of the area under cultivation?) and computation (for conversion of demand in kind into demand in cash?), land revenue demand was fixed anew.[11] When the Nasaq rates were adopted in the crown lands. the records of the area of the land under various cultivators ceased to be compiled.[12] New records of individual ownership of land were once again compiled giving the cropped area under different crops. The *Ain-i-Akbari* quotes a Schedule of Rates in kind as if it was current when the *Ain* was compiled. ,'The revenue levied by Sher Khan .... generally obtained, and for the conveience of the cultivators and the soldiery, the value was taken in ready money."[13] All experimenting on the part of Akbar concerned the commutation of rates in kind of Sher Shah's period into rates in cash. There is nothing to suggest that any attempt was made in parganahs for the purpose of ascertaining average local produce. The qanungos sent full particulars of the areas under cultivation and suggested a rate for commutation of the grain demand into demand in cash every year. It seems that the Ministry of Revenue obtained the imperial sanction for the rates to be enforced.

Zabti

But this did not last long. Imperial sanction of the rates of conversion took time and sometimes caused delay. Parganahs were not very suitable units to which to apply one uniform rate. It could only be an average and therefore not necessarily fair to all parts of a parganah. In the twenty-fourth year the system of *Zabti* was introduced to become the model to be striven after in the years to follow. The description in the *Ain* is a much simplified account of what was done. "From the beginning of the fifteenth year to the twenty-fourth, an aggregate of the rates of collection was formed and a tenth of the same was fixed as the annual assessment."[14] But the statistics recorded in the *Ain* do not bear this out. In the province of Oudh, for example, black sugar-cane is recorded to have been assessed for the last ten years at 200 *dams* a bigha.[15] This would have yielded an average rate of 200 *dams*. But the statistics for the twenty-fourth year record black sugar-cane being assessed between 203 and 240 dams in the various dasturs of Oudh.[16] The same is true of several other crops as well. A study of the statistics preserved in the *Ain* suggests that a twofold change was introduced at this time. The various provinces were divided into dasturs, *i.e.* assessment circles. The division seems to have been based on the difference in prices in various parts of the province. Areas where the same or almost the same prices prevailed were grouped together to from a dastur.[17]

The second change has been hinted at in the quotation from the *Ain* cited above. Instead of striking an average of the last ten years' assessment rates, the prices current in the dasturs during the last ten years were averaged and the resultant prices of various crops were used for the purpose of converting the demand in kind into demand in cash.[18] The new schedule of cash rates introduced in the various dasturs formed the permanent basis of assessment in Mughal India. There were 119 dasturs in all and as many different schedules of land revenue demand current in the areas where zabti was introduced.

To sum up, the system introduced by Akbar in the twenty-fourth year involved two processes. The cultivated lands under various crops were surveyed every season. This did not always necessitate actual meansurement of the land under crops. Then as now, the holdings of every cultivator were divided into subsections the areas whereof need have been measured only once. What the surveyors did was to record, like the modern patwari, that area number such and such of a cultivator's land was under sugar-cane. He would then refer to his original survey papers and find out the area of the number. Thus the surveyors performed what is today called *Girdawari* in the Punjab. The revenue officials in every dastur were furnished with detailed tables giving the demand of the state in cash for one bigha of different crops. Thus if he were dealing with a cultivator of of Firozabad in Oudh who had four bighas under sugar-cane, the revenue official would consult his Schedule of Rates, find sugar-cane assessed at *dam* 240 *jatal* 9 and demand *dam* 961 and *jatal* 11 from the cultivator. The rates were uniform in what we may conveniently call assessment circles. Throughout an assessment circle the rate of assessment per bigha for the same crop remained the same. This rate was based on the average prices prevailing in that area during ten years, *i.e.* the fifteenth to twenty-fourth, and the average yield per bigha arrived at by calculating the produce of a bigha of the good, middling and bad lands during the reign of Sher Shah. The arrangements introduced in the twenty-fourth year were revised in the twenty-seventh year by Todar Mal to whom the system owes its final form.[19] Fateh Ullah Shirazi perfected the system of auditing the revenue accounts in the thirtieth year.[20] We find two new principles introduced in the working of the system later on. In the years 30, 33 and 35 the rates were lowered on account of a very serious fall in prices.[21] When Akbar moved to the Punjab in 1001 A.H. the rates were raised on account of the higher prices. They were again lowered when Akbar left the Punjab in the forty-third year.

Other Systems

Zabti, however, was only one of the several systems prevalent in Akbar's time. Though this was the system he wanted to see introduced in all parts of his empire, it was not found possible to carry out survey operations in every part of the country. We have to remember that when any Raja or chief submitted, his lands became theoreticallly a part of the imperial domain and were usually given back to him in satisfaction of the salary of the mansab which was then conferred upon him. The entries in the *Ain* show that such areas were left alone. In the province of Ajmer, for example, no dasturs are given for the sirkars of Sarohi and Bikaner and no returns of any kind have been included. Obviously, the system of land revenue here was what the Rajputs had been maintaining from times immemorial. Akbar's conquest made little difference to their internal government. Similar must have been the case in Ambar (modern Jaipur), Jodhpur and certain other parts of Rajputana. Details for Jodhpur are given because for some time it was under imperial officers who may have tried to introduce the system. Detailed figures for Ambar are given. It accepted the Mughal domination much earlier than the introduction of this system and at no time was it ever placed under a Mughal governor. It is unlikely that its people voluntarily accepted measurement and survey and changed their old system.

Where the system of *Ghalla Bakhsh* prevailed, the grain was shared between the state and the cultivator. The state claimed from one-eighth to one third of the produce as the land revenue.[22] Other types of batai (sharing) were also practised. Some of them were meant to minimize the inconvenience inherent in the batai system. Sometimes the cultivated fields were demarcated, the state probably making its own arrangements for watching the growth and cutting of the crops of its own part of the fields. Appraisal was also resorted to when agreed upon, assessors examining the state of the standing crop and estimating its probable yield. The cultivator undertook to pay one-third of the yield thus determined to the state.[22]

There was also the system of *Nasaq*. The revenue was determined on the average of the land revenue paid for the last ten to twelve years, keeping in view any[24] improvements that might have been made in the land. It did not vary with the area under cultivation or the crops cultivated. It did not involve any survey or measurement of the land nor did it necessitate any periodic preparation of the statement of the crops.[25]

Then there was group assessment. A sum was agreed upon between the revenue officials and the muqaddam who was to realize the total from the cultivators.[26] This may have increased the status of the muqaddams. They collected the revenue from the cultivators according to the prevailing custom in the village, probably in kind, but paid the state in cash. The amount agreed upon and the period of agreement were settled locally and individually just as the rent payable by the tenants to their landlords is settled today. The state claimed one-third of the produce.

Some writers talk of a separate system—*Naqadi*. It is probably either a misreading for nasaq or simply refers to the option to pay in cash. No such system of assesment of land revenue exited in the Mughal times.

Jagirs

The land revenue of the lands held in jagirs was also similarly assessed. There was no difference between crown lands and the jagirs in this respect. The jagirdar realized the land revenue assessed by the imperial officials and collected by the muqaddams. Records were as usual sent to the imperial Secretariat.

A jagirdar was a civil or military servant who was paid his salary by an order which authorized him to realize the amount due to him by collecting the land revenue of the area assessed to yield the exact amount. The jagirdar was never allowed to stay long in any one place. Frequent transfers emphasized the fact that he was usually a bird of passage at the place he was stationed. The muqaddams paid the land revenue to him instead of paying it to the imperial collectors. If the emperor granted any remissions of land revenue for any cause whatsoever, the jagirdar was also bound to decrease his collections accordingly.[27] Thus the jagirdar was not a feudal baron having any 'rights' of his own over the cultivators. He did not stand between the cultivator and the king, he simply took the position of the royal officers who would have otherwise collected the land revenue had it not been assignd to him.

Distribution of the Systems

The zabti system prevailed in the whole of the Mughal province of Allahabad divided into 15 assessment circles. It has been suggested that the sarkar of Bhatkhara 'seems to have been left entirely in the hands of chiefs'.[28] It seems more probable that it had not yet been conquered and occupied. Its name is not mentioned in the list of nine sarkars in the Ain 15; the names of its parganahs are missing from the account of the provinces.[29] The entry of its revenue figures does not mean much. Similar entries are to be found for many unconquered districts of Bsngal. No record of surveyed area is to be found for seven other parganahs, though the Schedules of Rates include them in their respective assessment circles. In the parganahs of Mahoba in the sarkar of Kalinjar, the ghalla bakhsh system seems to have been prevailing; 1.20,000 betel leaves" are included in the figures for land revenue.[30]

Oudh was entirely zabti and was divided into twelve assessment circles. The Schedule of Rates for the spring harvest omits the figures for the last six assessment circles.[31] The omission may imply that they had no spring crops.

Agra, divided into 28 assessment circles, was also assessed according to the zabti system.[32] Land had not been measured in 16 parganahs; some MSS suggest that the system of naqadi (nasaq?) prevailed here. The sarkar of Mandasor is missing in the Schedule of Rates in the Ain 15. But in the Account of the Twelve Provinces the areas of its various parganahs are given and so is the land revenue.[33] The absence of a Schedule leads us to infer that it was either conquered or surveyed after the Ain 15 had been compiled, or that it was assessed in some other way.

Ajmer is said to have been divided into 7 assessment circles.[34] In the Account of the Twelve Provinces it is said that in this province one-seventh or one-eighth of the produce was given as the land revenue.[35] It means that the rate of revenue per bigha for different crops was less than the rates prevailing elsewhere. Though the Schedule does not favour such a suggestion, the province seems to have been paying revenue according to the prevailing local custom. This is still more likely to be the case because the greater part of the province was occupied by the various Rajput states. No figures either of areas or of rates are available for Bikaner, Sarohi and Jodhpur. The other states form parts of various sarkars. Here the area under cultivation may have been ascertained when they were conquered and for some time administered by the Mughals. But the restored Rajas of these states would not have been strong enough to set up and maintain—or to continue, if the Mughals had already introduced it—a system of land revenue assessment radically different from the one prevailing there previously.

Delhi was divided into 28 assessment circles. For Kumaon however, there is no Schedule of Rates. It is divided into 21 mahals. The revenue for five of these mahals is shown as yet 'undetermined';[36] that for the remaining sixteen is given in round figures. Moreland suggested that Kumaon might have been under chiefs. But we know that Kumaon did not form a part of the Mughal empire at this time. The figures of its land revenue probably represent what was known of the revenue potentiality of the district as then administered by its own chiefs. In any case they do not represent revenue figures according to the zabti system. Probably ghalla bakhsh was the system of assessment and collection in the conquered parts, if any, of the district.

Lahore consisted of eight assessment circles.[37] Some of the parganahs had not been measured and might therefore have been assessed according to some other system, that is, either by sharing of crops or nasaq. No figures for the area of the parganahs beyond the five rivers are given. One of them, Kehlor (modern Bilaspur) was a state under its own Raja and must have had its own system of land revenue assessment, probably sharing of the crops. The *Akbar Nama* mentions some other states under their own chiefs in the Punjab including Kangra, Jammu, Mao, Jaswal, Goler, Dadyal, Sibba, Mankot, Jasrota, Laganpur, Sher (?) Kot, Paladyo Chamba and Bhairiwal and Raja Krishna.[38]

Multan was mostly zabti. In Malwa, Mandal Garh was an independent state. The sarkar of Gogran seems to have been Naqadi (nasaq?); six of the 12 mahals had not been measured, the figures for the first and last parganah are shown by cash figures (*i.e. nasaq*). The sarkar of Mandasor also seems to have been nasaqi. The assessment circle Raisan and Chanderi alone has a workable Schedule of Rates. In the remaining two circles rates exist for very few crops. In the Ujjain circle they are expressed in Mahmudi coins, *dams* and *jatals*.[39] There was cultivation of cereals in two-thirds of the province. It may be argued then that a 'mixed' system of assessment prevailed here, zabti rates for selected crops and some other system for the staple crops. Probably Sher Shah's assessment rates in kind prevailed here. The selected crops are mostly those for which cash rates were common under Sher Shah.

In Bihar zabti was common. Out of 199 parganahs 138 were thus assessed and about 81 per cent of the revenue was thus collected. The entire sarkar of Monghyr yielding 10,96,25,981 *dams* and several parganahs in the sarkar of Bihar yielding 81,30,120 *dams* were not measured. In the sarkar of Rohtas the entries of the area in the parganahs of Dinarah, Patanpur, Kot Prin and Mongror yielding 3,13,185 *dams* are doubtful where 'ditto' (") alone signifies that the area was equal to that of the two preceding parganahs. The area of Nannor is given but its land revenue of 20.00,000 could not have been based on any Schedule of Rates. Similar entries are to be found for Garhsanah (8,76,200 *dams*) in the sarkar of Hajipur, Chulra (4,00,000 *dams*) in the sarkar of Saran, Aubhi (60,000 *dams*) Basin etc., (11,25,000 *dams*), Namwa (40,539 *dams*), Jabdi (45,025 *dams*), Koradi 90,000 *dams*), and Nauram (2,88,140 *dams*) in the sarkar of Tirhut[40] All these do not account for more than one-half of the land revenue of the 61 unmeasured parganahs as given above. Again, the fact that the revenue is stated in *dams* does not preclude the possibility of the old system of sharing the crop still prevailing. Or the system of nasaq might have been prevailing here. at least in some of the parganahs.

Bengal and Orissa present special problems. To begin with, not all the lands described in the *Ain* as forming part of Bengal and Orissa had been conquered at the time the *Ain* was written. The larger part of the conquered portion was still under local chiefs. Usman, the leader of the Afghans and the chief of Bhatti, Raja Satarjit of Bhusna, Raja Indra Narain in Pachet, Salim Khan of Hijili, Raja Bir Hamir of Mandaran, the Bhumya zemindars of Bhawal, Bikrampur, Bhalava, Chandra Dip and Khizrpur, Raja Raghu Nath of Shushing, Majlis Qutab of Fathabad, Musa Khan of Jatrapur, Pahalwan of Matang, Ram Chandra of Bagula, Bayazid of Sylhet, and several others are mentioned in two contemporary memoirs of Jahangir's reign as some of the independent chiefs.[41]

As described in the *Ain,* the syetem of nasaq seems to have been current in Bengal in the areas that were under the Mughals. There is nothing in the contemporary record to support Moreland's statement that the older system in vogue was continued by Akbar and that no detailed information about the province was collected.[42]

Now nasaq, though it did not involve any measurement of the land, did necessitate the preparation of 'Record of Rights' wherein the holdings of every cultivator and the land revenue assessed thercon were recorded. We know of no older system known as nasaq—nasaq and zabti were two new terms introduced by Akba's land revenue officials. Thus what Todar Mal did was to obtain information about the land revenue paying capacity of every cultivator. He then imposed the system of nasaq on the cultivators. Figures were collected for the preceding ten or twelve years and the average thereof was fixed as the revenue payable by every cultivator. This presupposed the existence of a detailed register of revenue accounts before Akbar's conquest of Bengal. Most probably the information was supplid by the hereditary qanungos and choudhris. If the revenue had been paid in kind so far, Todar Mal arranged for its equitable conversion into revenue in cash. His report to the emperor as contained in the *Ain*[43] does not therefore imply that he had taken steps to continue the existing practices only. Ghalla bakhsh, sharing of crops, must have ceased to be practised in Bengal under Sher Shah who introduced survey there. On the basis of that survey the land revenue must have been fixed in Bengal by Sher Shah. As time passed the schedules of rates might have been forgotten, the records for areas disappeared, but the assessment in kind without resort to sharing might have continued. Todar Mal changed it into assessment in cash.

In the province of Gujarat lay the states of Idar, Baglanah, Rajpipla, Durgarpur, Sirohi, Sorath, Jhalawar, Cutch, Nawangar, Nazarbar, Mohan, Lonavah, Barya, Bahria, Ranabad, Jabarmandi, Banswara, Soni and Ram Nagar.[44] Some of them had accepted Mughal sovereignty; others were still independent. We are told in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* that out of the 16 sarkars in Gujarat, the ruling chiefs of six paid the provincial governors a yearly tribute and undertook to send a contingent of horse for military service. Here the local custom of sharing must have continued. In the imperial territories there were many chiefs. In Idar (feudatory) the system of appraisal obtained. The measured area of Jhalawar is given. In the sarkar of Sorath the system of nasaq seems to have prevailed. For imperial districts proper revenue figures are given. In the sarkar of Ahmedabad 7,28,792 *dams* were realized from unmeasured parganahs out of a total of 20.83,06.994 *dams*. The sarkar of Godhra does not seem to have been occupied by the Mughals. Though the areas under crops and revenue in *dams* are given, no other details are available. The sarkars of Surat, Champaner, Broach, Baroda, Nanded were all measured. It is curious that no area figures for either Pattan or Ahmedabad are available.[45] It is difficult to understand the system that would measure land in the suburbs but leave Pattan and Ahmedabad alone. The system of nasaq prevailed in the imperial territories. But neither the text nor any other authority supports the statement of Moreland that the system of nasaq had prevailed in the country at the time when Akbar conquered it. The *Akbar Nama* and the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* both suggest that it was introduced by Todar Mal who was left in Gujarat to carry out revenue assessment in 1571.[46]

In the thirty-two Mahals of Khandesh all that Akbar is said to have done is to increase the existing assessment by 50 per cent.[47]

In Berar there were many chiefs. Chatwa, Dadhi Rao. Bija Rao, Nahar Rao, Wailah, Sarkoth, Medani Rao. Kamjeo, Indarjeo, Chaman Rai, Ram Garh, and Babjeo were some of the most important of them. There were the chieftainships of Baojarah, Basim and Manikdrun.[48] We do not know how many of them had been subdued by the Mughals. Akbar seems to have continued the existing system, only he increased the incidence of taxation.

In the province of Thatta, sharing of crops was common, one-third being claimed as the state's share. The cultivators had the option to pay in kind or in cash but were encouraged to pay in cash. Here again a very large part of the country was under chiefs who collected the land revenue from the cultivators and paid a tribute to the Mughals.[49]

In Kashmir appraisal and division of the crops are said to have formed the usual method of land revenue assessment. One-half of the produce used to be claimed by the state as its share. A part of the assessment was also made in cash probably where valuable crops like saffron were concerned.[50] Under Akbar one-third of the produce was claimed as the revenue. The settlement was made with the village as a whole which undertook to pay a certain amount of rice as revenue. This was based on a rate of demand assessed in kind based on immemorial custom.[51]

The State and the Cultivator

The cultivator in Akbar's reign dealt directly with the state. He paid the land revenue usually in cash. The demand of the state varied with area under cultivation and the crops cultivated. He was supposed to pay from one-eighth to one-half of his gross produce. The ascertainment of this share in cash must have been fair to him because he had the right to challenge the state demand and had the option of paying in kind if he felt himself aggrieved.

The cultivator was better off under Akbar than the tenant of today. He paid only one-third of the gross produce whereas the tenant parts with from 40 to 50 per cent of his gross produce today to his landlord. But on the other hand the state got a higher percentage of the produce of the land under Akbar, 33 per cent of the gross produce, whereas now the state claims to be receiving not more than 20 per cent of the gross produce. This was because the state recognized no landlords other than cultivators and also because the land revenue was the main, if not quit the only, tax on the masses.

The cultivators and not the state owned the land. They could sell, mortgage, and give away their lands in gift.[52] Land passed from father to son like all other property. The state had an interest in the landed estates of a cultivator who ran away after defaulting in the peyment of the revenue just as now. It made temporary arrangement for the cultivation of the land instead of attaching the cultivator's estate for the satisfaction of its claims as is done today.

Encouraging Agriculture

We have seen above that the land revenue collected depended upon the actual area under crops and the quality of those crops. In order to draw a larger revenue the only method open to the state was to get the area under cultivation increased, and encourage the sowing of the crops yieldisg a better cash value.[53] The encouragement of agriculture then was a necessary duty of the state. Akbar performed it by granting advances to the cultivators which were repayable within a year[54] These were uscally made with a view to encourage the introduction of better crops or help the cultivator towards defraying partial expenses of bringing new land under cultivation. In order to make it profitable for the cultivators to break new lands a very low rate was fixed in the beginning. Such land only paid one-twentysixth of the produce in the first year and it was only in the fifth year that the normal demand was reached. In the case of the land which had been left uncultivated for less than 5 years, the demand began at two-fifteenths and rose to one-third in the fifth year. When better crops were introduced there was a reduction of 25 per cent in the beginning on the sanctioned rates.[55] To guard against damage to standing crops in times of warfare, a special staff was recruited for the purpose of assessing such damage and paying the cultivators its assessed value.

For pastures, separate rates prevailed. The gardeners paid garden rates from the time of planting the trees, except in the case of two rather valuable crops, almonds and grapes, where probably there was a danger that trees planted might not always survive to bear fruits. Here a cash rate of Rs. 2¾ per bigha was charged only when the trees began to bear fruits. When agricultural lands began to be built upon, a flat cash rate was charged upon their superficial area and the parks attached to them if any.[56]

Akbar introduced certain mechanical and administrative changes in the method of the survey and measurement of land. The *jarib* ceased to be a string liable to be stretched. Bamboo poles with iron rings at both the ends were introduced. A *jarib* of a uniform length was introduced throughout the empire.[57]

Collection of Land Revenue

The collection of land revenue was made systematic. When the survey operations were complete, the demand for land revenue was computed. Demand-slips were prepared and distributed either through the patwari or the muqaddam. Then the collections started. Every season an attempt was made to clear off the arrears first. They formed the first chrge on the land. After the arrears, if any, had been cleared, the dues for that particular season were collected. Akbar improved upon the existing practices by ordering that the muqaddam be paid 2½ per cent collection by the state.[58] The board and lodging expenses of the surveying parties were also paid by the state in accordance with an imperial decree.[59] Any excess realized was to be credited against the next season's demand. There was a qanungo in every parganah who was paid at the rate of Rs. 20 to 50 per mensem.[60] The karori was at first appointed to be in charge of the revenue units each producing one crore of Tankas, but he soon became the revenue officer for the sarkar.[61] Badayuni states that when auditing of their accounts took place, many of them were found to be negligent or guilty and thereupon punished.[62] Smith has preverted the sense of the passage in discovering therein a breakdown of Akbar's revenue arrangements.[63] There was a Treasurer who issued collective receipts to the muqaddams and individual receipts to cultivators. There were, besides, accountants, surveyors, measurers, and karkuns. In every village or a group of villages, there was a clerk maintained by the state and a patwari maintained by the cultivators.[64]

When the collections started—on the *Holi* in spring and on the *Dusserah* in autumn[65]—daily reports of collections were sent by the Recorder to the Collector. Every month receipts were sent to the Ministry of Revenue. Any damage to the crops by unforeseen factors was to be reported to the emperor who would then order necessary remission of land revenue.[66] The regulations for the collection of land revenue and the preparation of necessary papers remind one very much of a modern Manual of Land Revenue Administration or the Standing Orders issued by the Boards of Revenue or Financial Commissioners.

A large number of taxes usually paid by the cultivators was remitted by Akbar. We have seen how he relieved them from the payment of many additional burdens which even now are borne by them. Besides this, presents, harvest fees, *nazars* of various sorts and several taxes on the supplementary sources of income of the cultivators were remitted. The remission of the jizya and the pilgrimage tax took away a very heavy burden. Taxes on cattle and trees, sale and purchase of horses, testing and exchange of money and several similar charges were also remitted.[67]

Total Receipts

The total amount of land revenue said to have been assessed, if not actually collected, under Akbar has been estimated at Rs. 14,25.09,318 and 12,00,000 betel leaves by Abul Fazl in the *Ain-i-Akbari*.[68] This figure excludes income from salt mines, the customs revenue and some miscellaneous taxes mentioned separately in the *Ain*.

Muhammad Tahir writing in the thirty-first year of Shah Jahan placed the total revenue of Akbar and Jahangir at Rs. 17,50,00,000 a year.[69] This is borne out by the *Chronicle of the Mughal Empire* by Palsaert who based his figures on the account book of 'the late king' and placed the total revenue at Rs. 17,45,00,000.[70] Even the earlier and lesser figure of Rs. 14,25.09,318 includes the land revenue of several places which had not been conquered yet. Further, it includes the estimated revenue of various states and chieftainships, the revenue resources of which were never at the disposal of the Mughal emperor. It is difficult thus to evaluate accurately the revenue resources of Akbar. It would not be too low an estimate if we placed it at Rs. 10,00,00,000 for the territories directly governed by the emperor. The income from the crown lands alone has been estimated at Rs. 70,00,000 under Jahangir by Quzvini.[71] This only implies that Jahangir was very lavish in the grant of jagirs. Tahir places the land revenue at Rs. 30,00.00,000, under Shah Jahan.[72] Abul Fazl tells us that when in the year 30, Akbar granted remission of one-eleventh in rabbi in the provinces of Allahabad, Oudh and Delhi, and of one sixth in the autumn harvest in Oudh and Allahabad, Rs. 17,66,676 stood remitted in the crown lands alone. This included a special remission of one-fifth in the neighbourhood of Allahabad in rabbi as well.[73] Similarly in the thirty-third year, by the remission of one-sixth in Agra, Oudh and Delhi in rabbi and of one-ninth in Allahabad and one-fourth in Agra, Oudh and Delhi in kharif, the State lost Rs. 48,32,000 in the crown lands.[74] Interesting as the figures for the crown lands are they do not carry our information about the land revenue very far. A larger income from the crown lands only implied the payment of cash salaries to a larger extent.

Todar Mal's Part

When zabti was introduced Todar Mal and Shah Mansur were joint Diwans of the empire.[75] Todar Mal was sent to Bengal after some time. Naturally the task of applying the new regulations fell to Shah Mansur. There is every reason to believe, however, that Todar Mal must have done his work of laying the foundation of the system well. He had been several times employed earlier for the purpose of solving knotty problems of land revenue administration in the various parts of the empire. It is probable that the appointment of Shah Mansur with Todar Mal had been a concession to Muslim feeling. His administration of the Revenue Ministry created many practical difficulties and Todar Mal who was in Bengal had to defend the officers stationed in that province against the meticulous demands of Shah Mansur.[76] In the year 26 Todar Mal was appointed the Vazir on his return from Bengal.[77] In the twenty-seventh year he was exalted to the high office of the Vakil.[78] It was now that the task of modifying the system that had been started in the year 24 fell on his shoulders. It was discovered that sometimes the collections had exceeded the limit of the revenue demand laid down by the Ministry. The actual measurement of the land under cultivation every year created difficulties. Arrears of land revenue had accumulated, the granting of advances had complicated accounts. Various other problems of detail also demanded attention. Todar Mal therefore issued a comprehensive order covering almost all phases of land revenue assessment and collection. Thus the system set up in the year 24 was now modified to a very large extent.

It was now decided to station a clerk in every village. Wherever excessive payment were exacted, the extra amount collected was ordered to be credited to the revenue for the next crop. All cultivable land was to be measured once for all. The cultivators undertook to stand security for one another and it seems the whole village community was also made responsible for the regular collection of land revenue. To encourage the bringing up of land lying fallow for 4 years or more it was decided that in the first year one-half of the ordinary assessment be realized, in the second year two-thirds thereof, and in the third the full demand should be realized. Land lying fallow for two years was to pay three-fourth of the assess-

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ment in the first year and the ordinary land revenue in the second. From a barren land it was decided to collect a nominal amount in kind till it was able to pay the full demand. Taqavi was to be granted on the security of persons known to the revenue officials and was to be recovered in two instalments. The relief to be granted to the cultivators was also regulated. In case of excessive rain a deduction of 2½ per cent was ordinarily allowed, which could be raised to 7½ per cent in sandy tracts or forests. All extraordinary damage to the crops was reported to the emperor and his orders obtained about the necessary reduction in revenue. The reports of daily collections were sent every week to the provincial secretariat and the revenue collected sent at the end of every month to the treasury. The treasurer issued receipts to the cultivators. The collector was paid his salary every quarter. Yearly reports were submitted (by the provincial diwan) about the work of the collectors. If the total receipts for a revenue circle as a whole showed an increase, no explanation was to be demanded about decrease, if any, of the receipts in any parganah therein. To facilitate the work of collection, tables for the conversion of old coins into those in use were supplied.

The work of survey and measurement was also put on a better footing. The area under cultivation was ascertained after making enquiries at the time when the crops were standing. The survey parties were to complete 250 bighas daily in the summer and 200 bighas in the winter. Their board allowance was also regulated. In the areas where sharing was in force an allowance for guarding the crop was allowed at the rate of half a *dam* per bigha.[79]

These detailed orders issued by Todar Mal prove that he was called upon to solve the difficulties arising out of the land revenue regulations issued in the twenty-fourth year. We have already referred above to the work that Todar Mal did in Bengal. Thus there is every reason to connect Todar Mal with the land revenue system of Akbar. It was not Khafi Khan who in the eighteenth century created legends about Todar Mal, as Moreland suggests.

Almost a century earlier Chandar Bhan had praised Todar Mal.[80]

In the thirtieth year another aspect of the question received some attention without changing the fundamental basis of the Mughal land revenue system. Amir Fath Ullah Shirazi was appointed Amin-ul-mulk and was called upon to set right the relations between the audit department and the collectors in the mofussil. As a result of his investigations it was decided to hold collectors responsible for the sums actually collected by them and to appraise their work for the entire area under their charge by comparing their collections with those of the last year. The allowance and the staff allowed to them were also put on a more satisfactory basis. From every parganah one qanungo was retained at the court.

One minor change was introduced in the collection of land revenue. If the malba (a local cess) was ever realized against instructions issued by the emperor, the amount realized was to be shown as credit to the cultivators for the next crop. The treasurers in the parganahs were recruited from among a decent class of people.[81]

Summary of Akbar's Work

The imperial territory under Akbar was divided into three classes: the territory under Zamindars, *i.e.* ruling chiefs, the areas held by the jagirdars, and the crown lands. The term Zamindar was usually applied only to those ruling chiefs who were allowed to retain their position as hereditary rulers of the territories under their control. To them Akbar's revenue reforms meant little. They collected the land revenue from the cultivators as they had been accustomed to do. In most of their territories various forms of batai prevailed, sharing of crops, sharing by appraisal, sharing of the area under crops. The share of the Zamindar varied from one-third to one-eighth. But for some time some of these States had formed a part of the imperial domains and as such it was possible for the Ministry of Finance to have preserved some records for them. As the States were given back to the rulers as jagirs their rental value was entered in the revenue registers. Whether it represented the land revenue actually collected it is difficult to say. Rana Amar Singh's son Karan Singh was created a commander of five thousand when Amar Singh submitted to Jahangir. The homelands of the Kachwahas were always shown as bringing in enough land revenue to support a mansabdar of 2000. The land revenue of several of these States could only be stated approximately. The position here was further complicated because there were jagirdars under these ruling chiefs who collected the land revenue in their charge and owed their chiefs only the performance of certain feudal duties. Jagirs were also assigned to various mansabdars in lieu of salaries. This was a varying quantity. The jagirs of various mansabdars were changed from time to time; sometimes a mansabdar was paid in cash instead of by a jagir. The same jagir would not be held by one mansabdar; on his transfer to another part of the country. it was probably held by another. The jagir was granted in place of a cash salary and hence the state was interested in seeing that it paid no more than the cash salary granted to the jagirdars. The land revenue assessment and collection here were regulated by the state as in the crown lands. They formed a part of the system prevailing in the neighbourhood.

Thus in these jagirs as well as in the crown lands four systems of land revenue assessment prevailed. Crop sharing of various types, zabti, nasaqi and group assessment were some of the systems in vogue. In all these systems except nasaqi the cultivators had the option of paying either in cash or in kind. In the areas where batai was prevalent, the imperial officers were ordered to encourage payment in cash at local rates. In the zabti area the cultivators had the option to pay in kind if they thought the cash rates were unfair to them. The system of nasaq, however, was bound up with payment in cash only and in areas where it prevailed no choice was allowed. Generally speaking, it can be said that Akbar aimed at introdccing the zabti system in all parts of his empire, but he and his advisers were too much of practical administrators to insist on enforcing it uniformly everywhere. Akbar desired payments in cash above everything else. This could be secured under all the systems in vogue. Lahore, Multan, Delhi, Agra. Oudh, Allahabad and Bihar, were mostly zabti except in the areas under independent rulers or zamindars *i.e.* ruling chiefs who had been able to contract out of the mansabdari system. Ajmer is also said to have been zabti but it is difficult to believe that jagirdars whose successors were clinging to their parochial rights so tenaciously till recently would have allowed their lands to be measured and land revenue assessed on them in this fashion. In Bengal, Orissa and Bihar, nasaq is said to have been introduced though a very large part of these provinces was either unconquered or under chiefs who continued their own arrangements. In Kashmir and Sind sharing of the crop was practised. In Khandesh the local custom was continued though the incidence of taxation was raised. Gujarat again was largely held by chiefs, many of whom were allowed to continue their own methods of administration on payment of a tribute to the provincial government. In the rest of the province nasaq is said to have been current. In all parts of the country there were exceptions and in some of these, group assessment might have been practised.

The cultivator paid direct to the state. There were no zamindars in the present sense of the term. The cultivators were owners of the lands they cultivated. The prosperity of the state was bound too much with the fate of agriculturists. There was enough uncultivated land to satisfy the land hunger of would-be cultivators who were encouraged to break new lands by special low terms of land revenue.

The land revenue was not a very just tax at the time. The state singled out one class of producers alone for payment of a general tax. The burden on the peasants was lighter in Akbar's reign than now though the state then got a larger share of the gross produce of the land than it does today.

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After Akbar

Under Jahangir the six systems prevalent during Akbar's reign continued with the zabti as the ideal towards which the Mughals strove. New territories brought under imperial sway in Bengal were measured and surveyed and in some areas the zabti seems to have been introduced. It was also introduced in some parts of Gujarat. The cultivators could exercise the right to pay one-third of the actual produce when they considered the zabti cash demands excessive.

As a set of appointment orders preserved in the library of the Muslim University, Aligarh indicates Akbar's orders with regard to the payment to certain revenue officials by the state fell into disuse under Jahangir. The choudhris of the sarkars were authorized to charge a cess of one per cent of the assessed land revenue from the cultivators and the qanungo of the sarkar charged two per cent. The qanungoes were made responsible for submitting to the Revenue Ministry all the revenue papers from the sarkar, particularly the seasonal statement of the harvest showing the cropped area cultivated by various cultivators and under different crops and the amount of revenue assessed and collected.

In Shah Jahan's reign the famine in Gujarat in 1630 put the zabti system of assessment to a severe test. Remissions granted by Shah Jahan did not amount to more than 9 per cent of the revenue. No wonder that the system broke down and in the forties sharing of the actual produce was restored in Gujarat. Six systems of assessment were prevalent under Shah Jahan: zabti, sharing of the crop, division of the field, division of the standing crop, kankut and nasaq. Akbar had appointed one amin in every province to work as an arbiter between the revenue officials in the sarkar and the cultivators. Shah Jahan appointed amins in every sarkar. The karoris now combined the office of the fojdar with their own revenue work and became the official superiors of the amin. Later on amins were appointed in every chakla, a new grouping of parganah within the sarkar. The karori was paid 5 per cent of the collections in his sarkar.

Under Aurangzeb three types of assessment of land revenue are mentioned in the *Khallaq-us-Sayyaq*: zabti, kankut, and batai. The *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* adds nasaq as prevalent in Gujarat. The rates of assessment ranged between one-half and one-seventh. The lowest limit prevailed in Ajmer as it had done under Akbar. Here the revenue was paid in kind. In Sindh and Kashmir one-third of the produce of land was charged. Some European travellers assert—probably without reason—that in some parts of the Mughal Empire the land revenue stood as high as three-fourths of the produce. This is plainly and emphatically contradicted by the *Nigarnama Munshi* and the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* which limit the revenue to one-half of the produce. In Orissa the revenue was paid in kind. Rice was the main crop. The collected produce was stored and sold by the governor and the proceeds sent to the court. Hashim Khan (1661-1663), when diwan in Orissa, capriciously doubled the total collections of some parganahs and trebled it in others. This would have entirely wiped out the produce of cultivators whatever the rate at which they may have been paying before. No wonder that the revenue could not be collected and the diwan was dismissed on the complaint of the Governor.

Remissions were granted to the cultivators for any damage to the crops which they could not have prevented. Under kankut and batai it raised no problems. but where zabti or nasaq prevailed it was laid down that whatever the amount a cultivator had been assessed to pay, the revenue demand in such cases should be so limited that the cultivators were left in possession of at least one-half of the actual produce. Elaborate arrangements were made for the collection of land revenue. After a village had been assessed for the season, the muqaddam received a statement of demand from the collector. The muqaddam in turn signed an agreement that he would collect the amount agreed upon. Sureties were found who undertook to see that the muqaddam paid the revenue. The choudharis and qanungos in the paganas gave cash securities undertaking due collection of the land revenue in their areas. The karoris in the sarkar gave similar undertakings and paid cash securities. The karoris were paid 5 per cent of the collections as their remuneration.

When agricultural land was built upon, it continued paying the previous revence. No revenue was charged from serais, cemeteries and cremation grounds. If trees were planted for shade or fuel, the usual revenue was charged. But fruit-bearing gardens paid one-fifth when owned by the Hindus, one-sixth when owned by the Muslims. Later on, a flat rate of Rs. 2¾ per bigha was levied from the gardens if the trees were so planted as to leave no land for cultivation. Lands under almonds or grapes paid the usual nasaq rates as long as they had not started bearing fruits. After that, land revenue was charged at half the value of the produce upto a maximum of Rs. 2¾ per bigha.

Land Revenue paid depended on the land under cultivation. Every revenue official was told that to increase the cultivated area was one of his most important duties. Where necessary, advances were made to the agriculturists for breaking new lands or those gone out of cultivation. As earlier, a gradually rising system of assessment made it possible for the cultivators to set off a part of the cost of breaking new land by the concession in land revenue which they received. Those who brought new land under cultivation were recognized as the owners thereof.

When land changed hands elaborate rules safeguarded the claim of the state to the revenue. If an heir or buyer had time enough for cultivating it after acquiring his title, he paid the land revenue. If land under a ripe crop was sold the seller paid the revenue. If the heir or the buyer did not get enough time to cultivate the land, the revenue was remitted. The lessee and mortgagee also paid the land revenue under similar conditions. This prevailed both in the lands assessed to fixed cash rates and in those paying batai revenue.[82]

NOTES

1. The *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, 347.
2. For details, See *Ain*. Cf. below. Chapter XV.
3. The *Ain-i- Akbari*, I, 297.
4. *Ibid*., I, 297 to 300.
5. *Ibid*., I, 303 to 347.
6. Cf. *Agrarian System of Moslem India*, 84.
7. Cf. the *Ain*., II, 69, 88.
8. *Ibid*., I, 303 to 347, cf. *Akbar Nama*. II, 270.
9. *Akbar Nama*, II. 333.
10. Cf. Nasaq as a System of Land Revenue Assessment in *Indian Culture*, January 1937, pp. 543 ff.
11. *Akbar Nama*, III, 117, 118; *Iqbal Nama*, 213.
12. Cf. *Agrarian System*, 244.
13. *Ain*., I, 297.
14. *Ain*., I, 347. 348.
15. *Ain*., I, 320.
16. *Ain*. I, 355.
17. *Cf*. *Agrarian System*, 87.
18. *Akbar Nama*, III, 282.
19. *Ibid*., III, 381.
20. *Ibid*., III, 457 to 459.
21. *Ibid*., III, 463, 533, 578.
22. *Ibid*., I, 297, 508.
23. *Dastur-ul-Amal*, Ram Puri; *Farhang-i-Kardani*. 32b to 33a; *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, 285 to 288.
24. *An*., I, 285 ff.
25. Cf. Note 10 above.
26. Cf. the letter of acceptance which a muqaddam was required to sign.
27. *Akbar Nama*, III, 463, 533, 578.
28. *Agrarian System*, 118.
29. *Ain*. I, 424 to 433.
30. This is an interesting case of land revenue being recorded in kind. *Ain* I, 430.
31. *Ain*., I, 354.

32. *Ain.,* I, 422, 443.
33. *Ain.,* I, 442, 443.
34. *Ain.,* I, 364.
35. *Ain.,* I, 505.
36. *Ain.,* I, 521.
37. *Ain.,* I, 377, 378.
38. *Akbar Nama,* III, 583, *Tuzck-i-Jahangiri,* p. 346.
39. *Ain.,* I, 457 to 473 and 383 to 385.
40. *Ain.,* I, 417 to 423.

41. Cf. 'Bengal under Jahangir,' the English abstract of *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* of Nathan by the present writer in the *Journal of Indian History* and also *Safar Nama Abdul Latif* (MS) Persian.

42. *JRAS,* 1926, 48.

43. *Ain.,* I, 393. The A.S.B. text has Naqadi but Moreland's reading Nasaqi is preferable.

44. *Mirat,* I, 188.
45. *Ain,* I, 493 to 508.
46. *Akbar Nama,* III, 65; *Mirat,* I, 131-2.
47. *Ain.,* I, 474 ff.
48. *Ain.,* I, 478 to 492.
49. *Ain.,* I, 556 ff.
50. *Ain.,* I, 570.
51. *Akbar Nama,* III, 548.
52. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi,* 123 ff.
53. *Ain.,* I, 285.
54. *Akbar Nama,* III, 381.
55. *Ain.,* I, 284.
56. *Mirati-i-Ahmadi,* I, 268 to 272.
57. *Ain.,* I, 296; *Akbar Nama,* III, 117, 118.
58. Ain., I, 285.
59. *Ain.,* I, 286.
60. *Ain.,* I, 300.
61. *Akbar Nama,* III, 117.

62. Badayuni. II, 192. Cf. the English translation. The translator is responsible for Smith's error.

63. Smith's *Akbar the Great Mughal,* 140, 141.
64. *Akbar Nama,* III, 381 and 63; *Ain.,* I, 287.
65. *Ain.,* I, 287.

66. *Ain.*, I, 286 and 287.

67. *Ain.*, I, 287 and 301.

68. Total of the land revenue of various provinces as given in the *Ain*.

69. Tahir, 248a.

70. Page 213 of the Dutch text & P. 33 of the English translation by Prof. Brij Narain and Sri Ram Sharma.

71. *Badshahnama,* 297b.

72. Tahir, 248a.

73. *Akbar Nama,* III, 463.

74. *Ibid.*, III, 533.

75. *Ibid.*, III, 282.

76. *Ibid.*, III, 316.

77. *Ibid.*, III, 372.

78. *Ibid.*, III, 381, 382.

79. *Ibid.*, III 381, 382.

80. Cf. *Chahar Chaman-i-Brahman* by Chandar Bhan for several anecdotes about Todar Mal and his revenue administration. Mr. Moreland is wrong in holding that the legends about Todar Mal arose late in the eighteenth century. Chandar Bhan wrote in Shah Jahan's reign.

81. *Akbar Nama,* III, 457 to 460.

82. Cf. *Irfan Habib; The Agrarian System of Mughal Mughal India.*

APPENDIX

The Land Problems during the Mughal Period

Ancient Indian tradition did not visualise ownership of lands as we understand the term today. Those who cultivated the land had substantial rights therein subject to their being called upon to make certain payments. The ruler had a claim to about 1|6th of the produce. It is possible that those who collected the ruler's share for him were entitled to a collection charge. Whether this came out of the ruler's share or was an additional burden on the cultivator was not always sure. It is possible that in times of trouble more than one claim might have been made on the cultivator on behalf of those who claimed to be rulers. Out of this may have risen the recognition of an over lord—below the ruler—who may have claimed a share of the cultivator's produce. It stands to reason that this share could but have been only a part of the ruler's claim though occasionally it may have been added to the burden which the cultivator had to bear.

The occupation of parts of India by Muslim rulers does not seem to have made substantial difference in the position of the cultivator. His burden may have been made unbearable sometime, as under Ala-uddin, yet his right in the land seems to have been scarcely affected. It is likely that no one was interested in disturbing the cultivator as a running arrangement for exploiting the land. No better arrangement—more profitable to the rulers—could have been easily made. It must also be remembered that though it would have taken some labour and some expenditure, new cultivators could have found lands enough to cultivate on their own. This surplus land was available almost everywhere and there could scarcely have been any substantial question of one land being more desirable than the other.

Under the Sultanate the rulers of Delhi seem to have been more interested in running their administration than studying nice problems of rights in land. We hear of various systems of collections of demands from land. Occasionally we hear of new methods of assessing the demand but usually the cultivator was left alone so that he could pay whatever was demanded from him. Babur and Humayun do not seem to have disturbed the previous pattern as they inherited it. It is claimed that Sher Shah introduced far reaching reforms in the assessment and collection of land revenue. If the entries in the *Ain-i-Akbari* offer reliable evidence, it will have to be admitted that Sher Shah's system could hardly have touched the areas which had been under Hindu rulers. Sher Shah is supposed to have introduced his land revenue system in 1541. He died in 1546. It would have been impossible to have introduced this system in areas which he conquered in the last two years of his reign.

We have fuller information about the assessment and collection of land revenue under Akbar and his successors than for any previous period. Here again we have to remember that what the chronicles are interested in describing are various methods of the assessments and collection of land revenue. All these take for granted that the cultivator owns the land but that the state had a claim on a part of his produce. The cultivator paid the land revenue usually in cash to a nominee of the state. The collector could not levy any additional cess on the cultivator for his services to the state. The cultivator could sell. mortgage and give away his land in gift. Land passed from father to son just as other property did. The state however took an interest in the ownership of land on account of its own claim to a substantial share of the produce. It interested itself in arrangements for the cultivation of land in cases where a cultivator ran away leaving the land uncultivated.

As land revenue was the most important source of income the state interested itself both in the extension of area under cultivation and in the introduction of commercial crops. Advances were made to the cultivators for bringing new lands under cultivation or for introducing beter crops. When new land was brought under cultivation the culttivator paid 1|26th of the produce in the first year when he had a crop. It was only in the fifth year that the state demanded land revenue at full rates. When land had remained uncultivated after having been under the plough for sometime, the cultivator paid 2|15th of the produce in the first year on his bringing it again under cultivation. As for new land, the normal rate of 1|3rd was here also reached in the fifth year. Introduction of better crops was encouraged by similar concessions in the earlier years. The regulations have it that the advances made to the cultivators were to be repaid without interest within a year. If this was strictly enforced, it is difficult to visualise how much advantage could have been taken of the state's offer to make advances.

European students of Indian History raised many unnecessary questions about the aggrarian system in Mughal India by misunderstanding the Jagirs granted by Mughals. During the reign of Akbar, Jahingir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb a jagir was a convenient method of paying the salary to a public servant—convenient to the state. Instead of paying salary in cash the state assigned the right of collecting land revenue in a particular area to a public servant but the area assigned was estimated to bring to the state the amount in land revenue equivalent to the salary of the public servant. Further he was not left to collect the land revenue at rates he liked. For one thing the cultivator would not pay more than the customary demand—the demand as settled by the state. For another the Mughal Government insisted that the land revenue be collected at the rates prevailing in the lands where the state itself collected the land revenue. We find Jagirdars willing to trade their jagirs at substantial discount for cash payments. Extravagent though the salaries of the higher Mughal public servants might have been, the sale price of jagirs abundantly demonstrate that the rate of demand on cultivators could not have been any higher in the jagirs than in the other areas. It is interesting to note that when natural calamities led to the remission of a part of revenue the remission was supposed to apply to the jagir lands as well.

After the European custom in the feudal days, land in Mughal India has been described as divided between crown lands and Jagirs. The description is wholly fanciful if it is to be supposed to apply to particular pieces of land. Normally a land once forming a part of a Jagir very often ceased to be so. The Mughal emperors did not have that incentive to have substantial part of land under them as demesne land which the feudal rulers had in Europe. They had full rights over all the land in their empire. The term 'Khalsa' when applied to a land did not trace any rights of the ruler therein as against the state; it did not bring the ruler to the status of a landlord as in feudal Europe. It simply implied that its land revenue had not been assigned to any public servant in lieu of his salary. Further Mughal law applied to 'Khalsa' and Jagir lands alike except of course in the case of Watan Jagirs of the feudatory princes who were only technically considered jagirdars in their own states.

The state demand in various areas varied from 1|3rd to the 1|12th of the produce. It is possible that in some areas the share of the state may have been estimated and taken in kind when the crop had been garnered. In some places the share may have been calculated in advance by various methods. In such cases the total produce was estimated by agreed upon methods and the state's share calculated in advance. When the crop had been brought home by the cultivator he paid the stipulated amount of produce to the state in kind.

Though it may have been convenient to receive state demand in kind in some places sometimes, the normal custom was to claim the land revenue in cash. The usual method for accepting a share of the produce in kind could not have been conveniently used as a basis when the state demand was to be expressed in cash. It would have taken too much time for conversion at current rates. The demand had to be finally approved by the Imperial Diwan if not by the Emperor himself. There couldn't be time enough for such approval every year. Akbar and his advisers therefore strove to ascertain average produce per Bigha of the best land, the middling land and the third class land. This average may have been taken either for the particular year or possibly over a number of years. Naturally, the average was less favourable to the cultivator of the inferior type of land. It should, however, be remembered that such land of low quality need not have been under cultivation at that time. The classes may have more to do with the existence of arrangements for irrigation and sufficiency or otherwise of rainfall.

When the average produce was determined, the state's share came to be fixed according to the formula in use in the particular area. Akbar sought to convert this into demand in cash. For this purpose it was necessary to ascertain the price of various types of produce. The prices current during the last 19 years were ascertained and conversion of demand in kind made accordingly.

This system of averages would have been very unjust to the cultivators if the state demand had been the same all over the empire. To obviate the injustice involved in such a schme the country was divided into assessment circles where past experience showed that the same prices prevailed for most of the commodities. The cash demand per bigha for various crops therefore varied from one assessment circle to another.

All these calculations and record keeping may not have been to the liking of some administrators and rulers or in some places other customs may have prevailed. Another method therefore came to be used based either on simple guess, intelligent estimate or another set of averages. The earlier system related the demand both to the cropped area and to the crop. An outright cash demand for a specified holding was felt to be necessary in some cases and might have been arrived at by any of the three methods suggested above. Besides avoiding a good deal of record keeping and paper work this system had the support of earlier Muslim practices in India and elsewhere. The Khiraj was to be paid in cash and it was easy to extend the idea of the tribute which a vanquished ruler paid to one's own subjects.

Conditions were different in Rajput states and possibly in some other areas which may have been conquered earlier from their Rajput rulers. Here jagirs or thikanas were hereditory. Here the jagirdar shut out the ruler from normal contacts with his subjects but if the entries in the *Ain* about the Suba of Ajmer offer us a safe guide, it seems the cultivators paid much less in this area as land revenue than was customary elsewhere. It is possible that to the revenue other cesses may have been added in the jagirs, thus minimizing the advantage these cultivators had over cultivators in other areas.

A long list of cesses which one Mughal ruler after another remitted finds place in the histories of all the Mughal rulers. One would obviously think that when a remission was granted these cesses were being levied but a deeper study of the documents seem to indicate that in most cases what was remitted was not what was being levied but what a ruler was supposed to have the right tc levy. A ruler was supposed to be entitled to grant remissions during his reign only; his successor had to issue fresh order granting the remissions but formally claiming that he was granting them on his own.

CHAPTER VII

PUBLIC FINANCE (EXPENDITURE)

Expenses on Administration

The Mughal State was not a war state; it had even gone beyond the stage of being a police state. It discharged several cultural functions. Its income was consequently spent on all those functions.

Probably the biggest single item of expenditure lay in what would be termed today as the direct demands on revenue: expenses of administration represented by the salaries of the public servants of all grades and varieties. It must have formed a much bigger proportion of the total expenditure in Mughal India than it does in the Indian budget today as it included the salaries of the larger part of the rank and file of the army and the entire salaries of the military commanders. Civil, military and police duties were so blended together that it was difficult to describe any official as serving in a purely military capacity. The fojdars—commanders of army contingents—were executive officers who had to secure such conditions in their charges as would make easy collection of land revenue possible. The kotwals—police officers mainly—collected taxes as well. The rank and file of the army was not paid directly, but through the commanders under whom they served. The payment was shown as the amount due to their commanders. How huge a hole this made in the entire Mughal resources it is difficult to assess accurately, as we shall see later. But it would not be an exaggeration to say that it must have amounted to about 40 per cent of the total expenditure.

But there was the actual cost of collecting taxes on the spot which we can estimate more accurately. As we have seen above, Akbar started paying the muqaddam's fee and the malba out of the state's share of the collections. Both these charges amounted to 5 per cent of the total collections. These is no indication in the subsequent records that Akbar's practice was changed later on, though the remission of the malba in Aurangzeb's reign raises suspicions that it might have again emerged as an additional cess. Besides these two items there was the salary of the surveyors (girdawars) which Akbar had fixed at Rs. 20 to 50 per mensem. How many of them were employed in all we have no means of judging. The parganah and the sarkar staff actually engaged in the work of assessing and collecting land revenue should have numbered about 5,000 at least throughout the empire. But when the mansabdars were paid by jagirs, much of this collecting staff would not have been needed. The muqaddams' fees and the malba would have come out of the salaries of the jagirdars. The total cost of actual collection can at best be put at about 7½ per cent, though how much of it came in from the salaries granted to the mansabdars it is impossible to say.

Military Expenditure

The money spent on arms, armaments, and military equipment and the actual cost of various expeditions again cannot be easily estimated. The soldirs had their own horses and arms. Occasionally they were supplied horses when their own were killed in battle. The *Ain-i-Akbari* seems to imply that they were issued arms as well. Muskets and pieces of artillery could not have been purchased by the soldiers at their own cost, nor could they have brought together the boats which they occasionally used when campaigning in Bihar or Bengal. The state kept several arsenals and top-khanas—artillery magazines. The deductions made from the salaries of the mansabdars included the sum deducted towards the cost of means of conveyance. The horses, camels, elephants, mules and oxen in the royal stables were as much for use in the service of the state as for providing sport, recreation or amusement for the king.

Emperor's Personal Expenses

The emperors spent large sums on themselves or on their pleasures. All the sons and daughters of the Mughal emperors had to be suitably provided for. This was usually done by giving them mansabs from their very birth. This simply involved fictitious appointments for them. Jahandar who was an idiot from birth was appointed by Jahangir the governor of Bengal when he was barely two years old. Even when the princes became old enough to discharge public functions, their mansabs bore no relation to their abilities as can be easily ascertained by comparing their mansabs with those held by commanders of equal official status. Khurram held the mansab of 20,000er at one time, he made his son Dara a 40,000er. As the princes, so were the queens and queen-mothers and princesses granted handsome jagirs. There was a separate treasury for what was spent on this account either by way of jagirs or in cash. The Mughal palace where the Emperor lived employed an army of servants of all sorts. Their number can be easily understood if we remember that the viceregal household in British India comprised more than 2000 servants. Separate account was kept in the Diwan's office of all the money spent on domestic servants.

In the palace or outside were situated royal stores, stables and workshops. Drinks, fruits, utensils (big and small), shoes, corn and other provisions, betel leaves, musical instruments, palkis and other conveyances, perfumes, games, robes, clothes, dresses, saddles, beds, lamps, gongs, candles, torches, intoxicants, silver- and gold-ware, jewels, flags, standards and other royal insignia, domestic birds, carpets and tents, chinaware, embroideries, trappings, sandal wood wares, ornaments, oil and ghee, medicines, turbans and silk cords were all separately cared for under superintendents and staffs of their own. The emperors had their library, paintings, parks—where the deer, leopards or other hunting animals roamed—and a dairy farm. All these cost a good deal of money. Presents were made to public servants and foreign potentates. Out of these stores, robes of honours were regularly distributed twice a year (in winter and in the rainy season) to the higher public servants. No one could proceed to the assumption of a high office, unless he had been given the appropriate robes of office. The Khan-i-Samans who issued these robes are known to have delayed assumption of office by delaying the issue of these robes. The annual cost of the presents, robes of honour, robes of office and other insignia of authority issued from these stores cannot be safely hazarded. The Finance Department, however, kept a detailed account of all moneys spent on these departments as also a daily account of the disbursements made out of them. Of course no distinction was made between the expenditure incurred on the king's person and royal household and on public account. The king maintained a large staff for his game, sports, amusement, recreation and travel. The large *Qumargah* hunts in which sometimes hundreds of beaters were enlisted could not have been organized by a small staff. When the emperor travelled, he stayed under canvas mostly. This necessitated the employment of a large number of labourers under *Khush Manzal*. The king had to be carried on a Takht-i-Rawan, a throne in motion, accompanied by a large staff. The imperial camp had its own attendants.

Thus the total expenses on the Mughal emperor's account must have been very great. A separate treasury provided all the money needed by the emperor for general purposes. From another, he drew money for his sundry out of pocket expenses. A third supplied him with funds for charitable purposes. A fourth treasury provided the needs of those living inside the palace. And all the time the Khan-i-Saman drew upon the general treasury for all expenses in his own departments.

The public works of the Mughals again were usually private buildings. The palaces, the forts and the gardens which delight the visitors so much today were built for themselves and not for their subjects. The mosques in the palaces again were intended for imperial use only. Parts of the palaces however were public; the Secretariat carried on its work there; the emperors transacted state business in certain parts of them. Roads, some canals, and several hundreds of serais were also built, repaired and kept in good condition. Mosques, howsoever built, were very often kept in repairs by the state. Shah Jahan spent Rs. 1,00,000 annually on the mosques in Delhi alone. The imperial tombs cost hundreds of thousands; Humayun's tomb at Delhi, Akbar's at Sikandara. Jahangir's at Lahore, Mumtaz Mahal's and Shah Jahan's at Agra in the Taj Mahal and Aurangzeb's in the Deccan were costly luxuries though open to the public. Akbar's tomb is said to have become a place of veneration soon after his death. Shah Jahan's buildings are estimated to have cost him Rs. 50,00,000.

Public Works

The roads were kept in repair because the emperors were great travellers. An officer of the Khan-i-Saman's department was always charged with the duty of examining the road in advance and making it fit for imperial travel. This naturally kept the roads better than they would otherwise have been. What was spent thereon we have no means of guessing. It was the duty of the fojdar to keep all bridges repaired in his district.

The dak choki could be made use of by the emperor alone. It was a corps of royal messengers rather than a postal organization. It was used both for official and for private purposes. Fruits of Kabul and Qandahar were brought by them to the emperor's table and rarities of the entire country drawn to the emperor's discriminating attention.

Workshops

The Mughal commercial undertakings must have cost a lot to the state. The expenditure incurred was met out of advances taken from the state. Manufactured articles were debited to the state at the market rates. This must have resulted in apportioning a large amount of money as expenditure for this department. There were

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about one hundred workshops at Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Burhanpur, Ahmedabad and Srinagar. Though they were earning departments, they were a big item of expenditure which included the cost of raw materials, the wages of artisans, cost of supervision of work and overhead charges for supervision, accounts and auditing.

Donations etc.

The Emperors maintained physicians who besides attending upon the Emperor in his illness served the public as well. The Mughal patronage of painting in its various forms made mansabdars of painters as well. Here a good deal of money must have been spent on materials as well on salaries. A separate department organized this work.

A large amount of money was spent in Madad-i-Mua'sh, honoraria and stipends. Most of the qazis and muftis were paid in this fashion. The muazzans—assistants to the imams—and priests in the mosques were given orders on the treasury for the payment of their own maintenance as well as for keeping the mosques in a fit state for prayers—for oil, carpets and provision of water there. Many of the qazis performed judicial duties and acted as registrars. Some kept schools. It would be difficult to decide how much money was allocated to the use of judicial officers and teachers and how much could be considered used for the provision of spiritual consolation alone. The *Ain* puts down the total expenditure at Rs. 30,00,000 out of a revenue of Rs. 17,45,00,000. Money spent strictly for the spread or the maintenance of Islam would also include the expenditure on the jizya department, the muhtsibs (censors of morals and religious observances) under Aurangzeb, erection and maintenance of mosques and other religious buildings, gifts made to Mecca at the time of the Haj, stipends given to new converts to Islam under Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, occasional gifts made to the pious and the destitute Muslims, regular grants given to certain institutions, Mui-ud-Din's Dargah at Ajmer or Nizam-ud-Din's tomb at Delhi for example, stipends given to students and the expenditure incurred on the Vakil Sharas.

The imperial patronage of education, literature and learning took the same form. Some Hindu and Muslim teachers received individual grants; certain institutions were similarly provided for. It is doubtful whether Hindu Pandits teaching in the *Pathshala-Mandirs* were given any substantial grants. Had it been so, Aurangzeb would have withdrawn their grants before ordering demolition of the temples. The provision made for Islamic studies has been grossly exaggerated. The province of Gujarat had three schools thus provided for!—they had three teachers between them and 45 stipendiary scholars! Certain men of letters, poets and writers found their way among mansabdars and drew handsome salaries.

An uncommon item of expenditure was the compensation paid to the cultivators when their standing crops were destroyed by the marching armies. A special staff was maintained at the capital for this purpose and its representatives marched along with the armies.

CHAPTER VIII

ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Lack of Organization before Akbar

When Babar invaded India for the fifth time and supplanted Ibrahim Lodhi on the throne of Delhi in 1526, he seemed to have found little cause for recording any remarkable distinction between the organization of public services in India and that with which he had been familiar elsewhere. He seemed to have continued the existing practices. gone on giving jagirs to those he considered fit for them, bestowed titles on others when he was pleased with them, fixed every new entrant's salary himself, and appointed various officers to such offices as he considered them suitable for. Humayun, though he reorganized the public administration of the country under 'celestial influences', left alone the question of the organization of the public services.[1] Sher Shah, though he made many other experiments in practical politics, seems to have been little attracted by this problem.[2] Thus jagirdars were mostly left to make their own arrangements for filling such public posts as were to be held under them. The garrison commanders who were scattered all over the empire holding the neighbouring countryside in awe made their own arrangements for appointing such public servants as they needed.

Akbar's Organization

It was left to Akbar to undertake a reorganization of the services. In the eleventh year of his reign, he introduced the numerical organization of his army. Abul Fazl thus describes the object and the contents of the regulation that was issued at this time: "As the branding department had not then emerged into being, at this time the number of attendants for all the officers and servants of the threshold was fixed, so that everyone should keep some persons in readiness for service."[3] The purpose of the regulation was, we are assured, to keep a number of men in readiness for military service under the command of the imperial officers. Had the branding regulation been promulgated, this could have been automatically secured. But now in order to secure a number of soldiers the total seems to have been distributed among the imperial officers. The number of soldiers everyone was to bring was fixed. This fixation gave the officers their titles from the 'Dahbashi' (commander of ten horses) to the panj hazari (commander 5,000 horses). Of course military commands and commanders have existed in all ages. Akbar now organized a graded system wherein the number of soldiers commanded was definitely fixed.[4] It is true that the *Ain-i-Akbari* speaks of several commanders who were dead long before the eleventh year as having held certain ranks. Bairam Khan and Tardi Beg are both described as commanders of 5,000.[5] This may simply have been a curious way of saying that they were the two highest paid officers. The *Tabaqat* does not assign any numerical rank to either of the two.[6]

The Mansabdari System

Certain features of this system came soon to be fixed permanently despite several changes that later crept into it. The salary of every official was determined and his rank in the service settled by his numerical designation. These designations became a ranking list.

The table in the *Ain*[7] gives the personal salary of every mansabdar. This is made clear by the fact that out of this salary an officer was expected to maintain a certain number of horses, elephants, and other beasts of burden and means of conveyance. Thus a commander of 5,000 had to maintain 337 horses, 100 elephants, 400 camels, 100 mules, and 160 carts.[8] The officers drew a salary for having been adjudged by the emperor as worthy of a certain rank. He received an additional amount for the number of soldiers he was asked to bring into the field to serve for imperial purposes.

In the eighteenth year the 'grades of ranks' were revised and everyone was given an appropriate rank in accordance with 'the number of men to be led and his devotion' to the emperor.[9] Here we get the first inkling that the number of men led may fall short of the rank an official held. This shortage was to be made good by his 'estimated devotion' to the emperor. Thus an officer was not expected to bring into the field the number of men his office designated. But the state did not suffer much thereby. The officer was paid for the number of soldiers he actually brought into the field. Of course he got his personal salary in full. That represented the Mughal emperor's estimate of a commander's worth in money irrespective of the soldiers he brought into the field. The rank of the officer indicated the maximum number of soldiers he might have been called upon to bring into the field. The officer became a contractor for military labour. A part of his personal salary was a retaining fee for this service. Another part represented the cost of his staff.

We have to remember that these mansabdars were very seldom army commanders alone. Many of them were serving as executive officers, governors, fojdars, kotwals and the like—their duties having nothing whatever to do with army command as such. They were, however, required to maintain contingents of troops. Of course the performance of these duties required the use of military forces sometimes. But there were other offices filled by mansabdars which did not require their ever leading military expeditions as long as they retained these offices. The Prime Ministers and the Finance Ministers, provincial diwans and news-writers culd not, in the discharge of the duties of their office, be called upon to lead armies. Under Shah Jahan we find this fact illustrated. Mir Salih was a writer of royal orders, ranking a 500er;[10] he had to keep 4 horses only. Mahammad Muqim, another 500er, had to maintain probably 3 and Shaikh Fazl had no such burden to bear. Todar Mal had led armies as the commander of certain expeditions, not while he was Finance Minister.

There were other offices wherein again leadership of the army was seldom a necessary requisite. We know of poets, men of letters, painters and even cooks[12] holding mansabs. The fact was that as mansab settled one's rank, all aspirants to Mughal service liked to be enrolled among mansabdars. Further, mansabs represented well-understood grades of pay. Instead of settling every public servant's pay individually it was more convenient to assign him to a mansab and leave him to fend for himself there.

Swar Rank

It is not surprising therefore to find that soon there came to be a divergence between a mansabdar's numerical rank and the number of soldiers he actually maintained and was paid for. In the year 1003 A.H. (1595) this divergence was formally recognized by revising rates of pay. If a mansabdar was asked to maintain the exact number of soldiers his command indicated he was considered a first class official in his rank. If his contingent was one-half, he was considered a second class official; in case it was even less than half he was an officer of the third class.[13] The difference in the salaries of officers of the three classes in the same rank was not very great. A panj hazari of the first class received Rs. 30,000 a month, whereas an officer of the third class in this rank received Rs. 28,000 a month.[14]

The divergence between the numerical rank and the strength of the contingent of troops under an officer once recognized, the practice spread. In the year 49, 1013 A.H. (1604), for example, we find Mir Abu Tarab, Bayzid, Kalyan Dass, and Abadi being appointed as hazaris with contingents of 500 each. Payanda Khan was appointed a sih hazar panjsadi (3,500er) and asked to maintain a contingent of 2,000 horses. But in several other appointments made at this time, only the personal ranks are mentioned; nothing is said about the contingents.[15] In the following appointments made in the fiftieth year (1013 & 1014 A.H.) the discrepancy becomes still greater.

	Name of the officer	Rank	Contingent
1.	Tardi Khan	2000	500
2.	Rahmat Khan	1500	600
3.	Pratap Singh	1000	500
4.	Kushak Bahadur	500	50
5.	Bhao Singh	2000	500
6.	Ram Dass	2000	40
7.	Salhadi	700	400
8.	Sayyid Ahmad	400	50
9.	Amin-ud-Din	500	150
10.	Hakim Muzaffar	1000	50
11.	Raja Man Singh	7000	6000
12.	Maha Singh	2000	300
	Total	25600	9140

Thus in these twelve appointments, whereas the total of the numerical ranks comes to 25,600 the total strength of all the contingents was only 9,140. No fraud on the State was however involved. The warrants of appointments clearly laid down what was expected of each officer.

Thus we find that till the end of Akbar's reign the status of the Mughal officials of all sorts was determined and their salaries fixed by the numerical rank to which they were assigned. These officials performed various types of duties all of which did not involve keeping contingents of troops. These were fixed in every individual case separately in the order of appointment. Contingents varied from time to time. An increased contingent involved probably an increase in the personal staff of the officer and hence there was a slight variation in the salary. An increment in the contingent did not always mean a higher personal salary; it meant an increase in the power of the officer promoted. Thus, for example, as long as a hazari's contingent did not reach 500 horse his pay remained the same. Rs. 8,000 month, then it became Rs. 8,100 and reached Rs. 8,200 only when the contingent was 1,000 strong.

Salaries of the Mansabdars

As the table at the end of this chapter shows, the salaries of these officials were very high even when compared with salaries in India during the British period. Governors of provinces were usually officers whose ranks varied from 2,000er to 5,000er; their salaries (in the highest grade in their ranks) ranging from Rs. 12,000 a month to Rs. 30,000.[16] As against this the highest salary of a provincial governor in India till 1947 was Rs. 1,20,000 a year.[17] But the comparison is inapt. The salaries of the Mughal governors represented their total cost to the state and a part of it returned to the state in the excess of the value of the presents governors made to the emperor over the gifts which they received from him. No extra travelling allowances and no entertainment money were sanctioned, no extra staff provided for and no amusement arranged for. Further, out of his salary the governor was expected to maintain a certain number of beasts of burden and carts. Thus the panj hazari who received Rs. 30,000 a month had to make the following payments.

Elephants	100	Rs. 1735
Horses	337	Rs. 3961
Camels	400	Rs. 2400
Mules	100	Rs. 300
Carts	160	Rs. 2400
		Rs. 10796[18]

This was only a part of the monthly charge. The whole staff of the provincial governor was to be maintained by him. The governor had a diwan, a bakhshi, sometimes a a wazir, a chief secretary, a news-writer, a personal assistant, a reader, and a mir-i-saman. besides a host of minor officials of his own whom he paid out of his own pocket.[19] He maintained a vakil at the imperial court. Even then at a very liberal estimate about Rs. 12,000 a month were still left to the governor. This would be equal to Rs. 1,00,000 a month of modern times, if we take the purchasing power of the money into consideration.[20] This may be usefully compared with the total amount of money provided for the Governor of Bengal during the British period.[21]

1.	Salary	Rs.	1,20,000
2.	Staff	Rs.	3,39,800
3.	Misc. and motor car	Rs.	1,00.000
4.	Tour	Rs.	1,22,000
5.	Sumptuary allowance ..	Rs.	25,000
	Total (for a year) ..	Rs.	7,06,800

The Grades

From the tables given in the appendix it is clear that under Akbar there were thirty grades of these officers, from 10er to 5000er. The 1250 rank did not exist in theory,[22] but we know that several appointments in that grade were made.[23] The grade 1200 is mentioned but no appointments have been found to be made therein. Towards the end of his reign one more rank was added—that of haft hazari[24] (7000er). So there were 31 effective ranks of officers existing during Akbar's reign. Two officers had earlier held the rank of 4500er but were dead at the time the *Ain* was compiled. Under Jahangir some of Akbar's ranks were discontinued. There are no panjahis (50ers), 120ers, 600ers, 800ers, 900ers, 1200ers, or 1250ers in Pelsaert's account which further seems to imply that there were no ranks above 5000er under Jahangir. This might have been true at Jahangir's accession only. Commanders of 600, 800, 900, and 1200 are mentioned in the *Tuzak.*[25] We know that Man Singh was a 7000er at Jahangir's accession.[26] Another mansabdar was promoted to 6000 later on. Several other appointments were made in the grades which were not current in Akbar's time. We have officers of 550, 750, 1200, 1300, 1400, 1800, 2500 mentioned in the *Tuzak.*[27] Thus the number of grades under Jahangir rose to 34. Shah Jahan discontinued the ranks of 10, 50, 120, 150, 350, 1200, 1250, 3500 and 4500 besides the new ranks added by Jahangir. He added two ranks at the top however, 8000er, and 9000er.[28] No appointments were made during his entire reign in the rank of 8000 even though the *Manual of Administration* shows a salary for this rank.[29] Thus under Shah Jahan we have 25 ranks only beginning with the 20er and terminating at the 9000er. As we have seen above, the 8000er existed only on paper. Under Aurangzeb the 8000er and 9000er disappeared but the 50er was revived and so was the 4500er.[30] The total thus became 27.

Strength under different Emperors

The total number of mansabdars furnishes an interesting commentary. Under Akbar there were 148 Umara of 500 and above at the time the *Ain* was compiled. This rose to 439 under Jahangir, to fall to 405 in 1637 and rise again to 446 in 1647. The total number of mansabdars in the four reigns however reveals astonishing differences. There were 1658 ranked public servants under Akbar in about 1590, 2069 under Jahangir, 8000 under Shah Jahan in 1637, and 11456 in 1690.[31] It has been suggested that as the *Ain* mentions by name public servants of 200 and the *Badshah Nama* records those above 500 this should imply that 200ers had the same grade under Akbar as was occupied by 500ers under Shah Jahan.[32] This suggestion however finds no support in their salaries. A 200er under Akbar got Rs. 11,700 a year, whereas under Shah Jahan the salary of the 500er of the first class was Rs. 20,000 a year. A 200er under Shah Jahan got Rs. 7,500 a year against Rs. 11,700 under Akbar.

Under Shah Jahan, 846 mansabdars held public offices of the status of 500er or above throughout his entire reign. Of course several of them were dead when the list was compiled. As against this 252 appointments of 500er and above were made till about 1590 in Akbar's reign. No list of Aurangzeb's mansabdars can be compiled which could claim to be exhaustive.

The increase in the number of mansabdars in the reigns of Akbar's successors can partly be attributed to the expansion of the empire under them. But this would account for only a fraction of the rise which seems to have been largely due to the inclusion of several classes of state servants among the mansabdars not included previously among them. To begin with, a much larger number of Rajas, chiefs, and their dependants figure among the mansabdars than was the case under Akbar. Under Jahangir we find a superintendent of stalls holding the rank of a 1000er.[34] A superintendent of the farrash khana did even better and was made a 2000er.[35] A superintendent of goldsmiths was also 1000er[36], whereas the bakhshi of dar khana was a 1500er.[37] A wrestler was given a mansab in the eleventh year[38] and we find a story-teller holding the rank of 200er.[39] A librarian held the rank of a 1500er.[40] A provincial inspector of buildings was a 1000er[41] whereas under Akbar 1000ers had served as the governor of provinces.[42] But Jahangir seems to have cheapened the higher ranks rather than increased the total number of mansabdars. Palsaert however mentioned the number of mansabdars on Jahangir's accession only and we cannot judge of the result of Jahangir's toying with the state services from Palsaert's list.

In the fifty years of Aurangzeb we have not less than 148 Hindu mansabdars of 1000 and above[43] as against 14 Hindu mansabdars and 137 mansabdars in all under Akbar.[44] Akbar's list seems to include public servants, civil and military only. The court bulletins of Aurangzeb's reign furnish us with a curious insight into the contemporary mansabdar organization. We have qazis holding mansabs[45] and Vakil-i-Shara being given high command.[46] It is doubtfull weather under Akbar, news-writers, pure and simple, held any mansabs. Under Aurangzeb we find the news-writers and postal messengers holding mansabs varying from 100 to 250.[47] Coming to the imperial household and the royal court we find a royal mace bearer of 200[48] and a superintendent holding the rank of a haft sadi (700er).[49] The superintendent of the royal anteroom was a panj sadi (500er).[50] A reader of the court bulletins in the imperial court is found to be a sih sadi[51] (300er) whereas another held the rank of a haft sadi (700er).[52] A superintendent of the royal kitchen was do sad panjahi (250er-.[53] A superintendent of royal tours is found to be a 450er.[54] Among the manufactures, we have a 1000er superintendent of goldsmiths, and another of royal drinks.[55] A 400er is found supervising a diamond mine,[56] whereas another was in charge of ilaqband khana.[57] In the army the Ahdis required three bakhshis.[58] There was a bakshi (500er) of skilled labourers of various sorts[59] and a superintendent (250) of bearers.[60] In the ecclesiastical department, we find a superintendent of presents (nisar) a 500er,[61] a censor, a 200er [62] and a provincial sadr, 500er.[63] In the public works department we have a mir-i-amarat, 400er[64] and a superintendent of the buildings at Lahore a 250er,[65] a superintendent of irrigation in the province of Lahore holding two offices being a 400er.[66] The superintendents of various types of imperial stores are found drawing their salaries as mansabdars of from 200 to 2500.[67] Even the store keepers[68] of the royal princes were mansabdars. A manufacturer of scent was a 400er,[69] while another was more fortunate as he was a 500er.[70] A superintendent of stables is found to be a 400er[71] The royal servants sent to make purchases also held mansabs; we find one 300er[72] and another 400er[73] mentioned. A superintendent of gardens was a 150er.[74] An overseer of masons was a 250er.[75] Various types of permanent contractors of labour were also similarly paid. We find one holding the rank of a 300er.[76] Officers in the mining department are also found holding similar offices.[77] Many tax collectors also held mansabs. A superintendent of the market was 200er in 1704.[78] An assessor of the remission to be granted to the cultivators for the land trampled by the armies was a 250er.[79] The customs officer at Surat was always an official of high rank. A musharaf of the library was a 200er in 1694.[80] A superintendent of the royal library in 1703 was a 400er.[81] A tahvildar of the library (sectional curator probably) was only a sadi (100er) in 1704.[82]

Aurangzeb created a new department for the collection of the jazya. Various officers here did not go beyond 700er. There were various grades of collectors put in charge of parganahs, sarkars, provinces, sometimes a group of provinces and particular cities.[83]

Certain officers on the staff of various princes and other members of the royal family also held mansabs. A superintendent of maids in Kam Bakhsh's palace was a 300er in 1703.” A physician in the palace of Queen Udaipuri Begam was a 150er.[85]

Bakhshis, mir-i-samans, diwans, sadrs, diwan-i-bayutats, superintendents of the palace, superintendent of the diwan khana, daroghas of charities, and mir-i-tuzk of princes and other members of the imperial family are spoken of in the news-letters of the period as mansabdars of various ranks and grades.[86] A superintendent of the private audience-hall also held a mansab.[87]

Various types of members of the staff of executive officers also held mansabs. A news-writer of the Khan-i-Saman's office was a 300er in 1702[88] and a personal assistant a 400er in 1704.[89] A personal assistant of the Governor of Lahore combined this office with that of fojdar of Sirhind.[90] The writer of ranks in the office of the imperial Diwan was a 100er in 1704.[91] Physicians in charge of public dispensaries ranked as mansabdars. A superintendent of a public dispensary in 1692 held the rank of a 700er.[92]

Thus under Aurangzeb many more officers were given mansabs than had been customary under Akbar. Further, officials were multiplied to discharge the same duties. Not only was the work of the Diwan distributed among three officials, similar divisions appeared in the office of sectional or provincial diwans as well.[93] The growing luxury of the imperial entourage also increased the number of public servants in attendance upon the emperor. The complexity of the work of the government was further responsible for this increase.

Recruitment to Public Services

All mansabdars were directly recruited by the emperor. The number of the new recruits added every year was not very large. We have the daily court bulletin for about ten months of the thirtf-eighth year of

Aurangzeb's reign. During this period only seventy-six new mansabdars were appointed in the ranks of 40. 60. 80, 100, 150, 200, 300, 400, 500, 700, 1000, 2000, 3000. 4000, and 6000. The new recruits include, among others, Maratha deserters and the relatives of mansabdars already in service. The number of foreigners among the new appointments of the year is almost negligible. Most of the appointments were made in the lower grades. The emperor usually acted on the recommendation of the leaders of military expeditions, the governors of the provinces, and high officials of the court. When an appointment was first announced, usually the rank and the salary of the new entrant alone were stated. The actual work to be entrusted to him was decided later on. There were no public examinations and no interviews for selection. The imperial eye was always considered sharp enough to discern merit. But once an officer was enrolled in the Mughal public services, it was mostly his capacity for pleasing the emperor in office, or on the battlefield, as a qazi or a physician, that decided his promotion. Increment in rank and salary usually followed the two new year festivities, the royal birthday festivities and the termination or the beginning of an expedition. Besides successful service the presents made to the emperor also played some part in deciding promotions.

Honours, Titles, etc.

Various types of honours were conferred on the public servants. Titles were bestowed and taken back,[94] use of certain emblems of greatness allowed and cash gifts bestowed. Robes of honour were given sometimes from the emperor's own wardrobe.[95] Ornaments of various descriptions were distributed, swords and daggers with costly handles were awarded. Several types of means of conveyance—*palkis,* horses, elephants with rich trappings—often marked their recipients as special objects of the emperor's favour. Kettle drums and the permission to play them were granted' under certain conditions. No one was allowed to beat kettle drums when coming out of his residence.[96] Further, they were not to be sounded in the emperor's presence or near his camp. Out of this were born many complications. Sometimes the leader of an expedition might insist that inferior mansabdars be not allowed to beat their drums.[97] Ordinarily these honours were not conferred on those below the rank of 2000er but the emperors could of course always make exceptions. A greater honour was the permission to fly one's own flag. This was not supposed to be conferred on those below the rank of 5000er.[99] We have however several cases in Aurangzeb's reign where many officers with lower ranks were granted this honour. Muhammad Ibrahim, a Hazari (1000er) was given a flag on December 14, 1699. Even earlier the honour had become so cheap that on October 22, 1694, Aurangzeb called for a statement from one of his superintendents showing how many officials between the ranks of 1000 and 7000 had received the right to fly their own flags and beat their own drums.[100] The highest honour conferred was the use of the Mahi-o-Maratab, (representation of a fish on a pole carried on an elephant with certain other insignia). It was not supposed to be given to any one below the rank of 6000er. But we find Aurangzeb conferring it on Nasrut Jang who had a lower rank.[101] Money grants were also frequently made. These might imply either the grant of an additional jagir or a cash order on the treasury. All these honours, like the titles, were held during imperial pleasure only.

Jagirdars

The method of paying salaries has been much misunderstood. Most of the mansabdars were paid their salaries in cash. Thus in 1690 or threabout, out of 11456 mansabdars 7999 were receiving cash salaries. Only 3457 held jagirs.[102] When a mansabdar was given a jagir in lieu of his salary this did not make him in any sense of the term the owner of the land held as a jagir. The cultivators remained owners of their lands as before. He simply got the right of collecting the land revenue from the assigned tract. Further, he was authorized to collect only the land revenue as the state had assessed it on the cultivators. If any incidental charges were remitted, he was expected to discontinue realizing them[103] Under Akbar all remissions of the land revenue granted by the emperor took effect in the crown lands as well as in the jagirs.[104] In its own interests it was necessary for the state to see that the jagirdar realized no more than the sanctioned dues. The jagirdars were not farmers of land revenue who had purchased the right of collecting land revenue from the state for a consideration. They had a claim against the state for their salaries and were therefore asked to collect the land revenue equivalent thereto which the state would otherwise have had to collect for itself. Any excess collected not only involved injustice towards the cultivators, it was a fraud against the state. If the state learnt that a particular tract had been made to yield a larger amount than was due to the particular mansabdar, it could reduce the jagir. A letter of Meghraj, the agent of the Raja of Jaipur in the imperial court dated 7 Zi Haj in the 36th regnal year of Aurangzeb informs the Raja that the excess of revenue collected had to be paid to the treasury.[105]

Under Aurangzeb the powers of the jagirdars became very great when sometimes they were appointed executive officers of the assigned territory. No one was however allowed to exercise any executive powers by virtue of his holding a jagir only. Executive powers could only be exercised when a jagirdar was appointed to hold a particular executive office as well. As early as September 1669, we hear of Rustam being appointed the fojdar of Nagpur where he already held a jagir. Similar cases occur in the accounts of the year 1696, and 1700.[106] These may however have formed an exception.

In replacing the collecting agency by his own servants, the jagirdar acquired the right of adjudicating disputes about the land, if and when they were brought to his agents by those concerned. This would usually happen only when the village or the caste panchayat failed in deciding the case or in giving satisfaction to one of the parties by its decision. We have to remember that primary revenue records were prepared and kept on behalf of the villagers by the patwari who was an agent of the community and paid for by them. Thus there was no chance of any conflict of authority between the village panchayat and village officials trying to increase their own jurisdiction. A case would go to the jagirdar's court only if the panchayat's decision was not acceptable to the parties.

In making payment by jagirs the state gained a good deal. It was saved the necessity and the cost of appointing its own agents for collection. A jagirdar was usually worse off than a mansabdar who received his salary in cash and who had therefore no cost of collection to defray. An interesting document in the Jaipur Records gives us some idea as to what the jagirs were worth in Aurangzeb's reign to the assignees. Sayyid Masud had a jagir in the parganah of Chastu worth 4,63,786 *Dams* (Rs. 10,094). In the thirty-fifth year he farmed his rights to Kushal Singh, Subhal Singh and Swami Dass for a payment of 201,840 *Dams* clear of all expenses, to be paid to him in instalments wherever he might be.[107] If this is a typical case revealing the worth of the jagirs to the assignees, our ideas about the high salaries of the jagirdar mansabdars will have to be radically revised. At any rate in the beginning of the eighteenth century things do not seem to have been much better. We find Sadiq Khan, an 800er, asking for a cash salary in place of a jagir[108] whereupon his mansab was reduced to that of a 400er. Another jagirdar did a little better. He got his salary changed from jagir into cash at the rate of 7|12ths.[109] A general order issued about this time tells us that the cash salaries were given at half of the value of the jagirs.[110] In another case a jagirdar fared even worse. He got 5 months' salary in cash in exchange obviously for a full year's jagir.[111]

As against this we have an interesting case in the reign of Akbar. Yusuf in Kashmir was given an assignment of the revenues at 22 lakh *Kharvars*.[112] (assloads) converted into cash at 16 *dams* a *kharwar*. He had thus been given a jagir there worth Rs. 8,80,000 a year. A complaint was brought to the court that the assignment was worth much more, in fact worth Rs. 23,10,000 a year.[113] Soon after—probably as the result of the investigations started at this time—the revenues of the province of Kashmir were resumed by the crown.[114]

Any chance of the jagirdars being anything more than collectors of land revenue in their jagirs was made impossible by the frequent transfers of jagirs. "These and other places, are given away by the king according to his pleasure to the captains he is inclined to favour. Some are changed every year or half year, or once in two or three years ... Thus no captain can depend upon the place given to him.........The servants of the king have no security of any place." Thus wrote a Dutch factor in the twentieth year of Jahangir's reign.[115] The Persian chronicles are also full of the records of transfer of officials from one place to another. As they were transferred they tried to see that their jagirs were also changed. But in this they were not always successful. When Aurangzeb spent twenty-seven long years in the Deccan, the Mughal officials, civil and military, serving there did not all have their jagirs in the south. Sometimes they tried to secure jagirs there. But the Deccan was not large enough to support the entire Mughal administration. So in August 1703 an order was issued that cash payments should continue being made and no jagirs be granted to any officer in the imperial camp or in the Deccan without special orders of the emperor.[116]

Loans, Advances and Recoveries

The state helped its officials in times of need as well. Advances were made to them on furnishing adequate security.[117] An official appointed newly to a high command needed money and sometimes borrowed it from private money-lenders. There is a very interesting case reported in the news-letters. An official borrowed money on being appointed to a high office. However before he could actually take charge of the work, he died. The creditor thereupon complained to the emperor who ordered his successor to discharge the debt as his predecessor had mortgaged some official papers with his creditor.[118]

The frequent transfer of officials and their jagirs made the work of keeping accounts rather difficult. Not only were they transferred from one place to another, they were very often transferred from one department to another, from garrison duty to active command and the leadership of expeditions. These transfers often created confusion in accounts. When expeditions had to be organized, their leader would not wait for the audit certificates of the imperial auditors and the emperors would be in too great a hurry to insist on that. The result was that the settlement of accounts was not promptly made. The conduct of an expedition would further result in complicating such accounts. We find Rustam Khan, for example, writing from Kabul to the emperor (Shah Jahan) detailing his expenses. He had 4500 men and he spent on them and other items Rs. 200,000 a month. He had received only Rs. 1,20,000 from his jagir and had realized Rs. 1,20,000 from the imperial treasury in Kabul. He requested the Emperor to send orders to the imperial diwans in Lahore and Kabul to make him necessary payments in order to enable him to meet his monthly expenses. The amount thus advanced to him, he suggested, could be reimbursed from his jagirs.[119]

Complication of accounts brought in its train the Mughal doctrine of escheat. When a man-sabdar died, naturally the state would like to have the accounts settled. The personal estate of the official mainly ronsisted of movable goods and may be his house. Immovable property bearing income did not exist as no one could acquire any right in the land; and building of houses for purposes of drawing rents was not very common and could be resorted to only in big cities. Thus if the state wanted its accounts squared, it had to prefer a claim to the movable property of the dead official. As there was the danger that his family might dispose it off, the state resorted to the custom of seizing the official's property as soon as the news of his death spread. As soon as a mansabdar died, it became the duty of the Diwan-i-Bayutat or his representatives to take charge of the dead man's property, seal all his effects and wait for any order the emperor may like to give on any representation made by the bereaved family. The property of the deceased stood as a security for whatever he might be owing to the state. Then began the settlement of accounts. With the mansabdar dead, it was possible for the revenue and military departments to spin out the accounts. Very often the whole property of the mansabdar was swallowed therein. On their own side, the mansabdars lived so well that very seldom did they leave much in their own houses which was not secured to some creditor. The payment of one's debts was a religious obligation, and not simply a legal duty; but we know nothing about the way in which the state considered the claims on the estate of a dead mansabdar by his creditors. If these were allowed to take precedence of the state's demands, not much would hape been left for the state to claim as its own share for its dues.

On his accession, Jahangir issued orders that whatever remained of the share of the children of the deceased —after the state dues had been exacted—be paid to them out of the property of their father.[120]

Aurangzeb's long stay in the Deccan complicated matters still further. It seems usually the accounts were settled every year. But when as usual the revenue ministry demanded the payment of Rs. 400 due to the state from a mansabdar, Aziz Ullah Khan, who had a jaggir worth Rs. 40,000. he made a representation to the emperor. On January 30, 1704, an order was thereupon issued that as long as he was serving in the Deccan the dues be not demanded. It is likely that this was made into a precedent and other mansabdars serving in the Deccan might have received similar relief. Settlement of accounts withheld for a long period must have created further complications and justified zabti.

Much has been said about the injustice and cruelty involved in this procedure.[121] Most of the sympathy shown for the dead nobles or their descendants is rather misplaced. To begin with, the wife—or rather the wives—of a mansabdars never suffered much, as at the time of marriage, every Muslim woman is allowed to claim a consideration from her husband. In the case of rich officials this was always a substantial sum and in those days when these officials kept large harems every member thereof must have managed to secure her dues herself. The marriage portion was hers by the Muslim Law and no institute set up by the Mughal emperors could override it. Then there were the children of these nobles. The emperors were almost always partial to the descendants of their officials to whom they gave a generous start in life. Those who declaim loudly against the system of zabti should carefully read the lists of grandees under Akbar and his successors where they would find the sons and the relatives of mansabdars figuring so largely. Abdul Latif, writing early in the reign of Jahangir, tells us that Akbar cared for the children of the dead mansabdars and brought them under his own protection.[122]

There is not enough evidence available to assess the the injustice, if any, involved in this system to the descendants. It is doubtful whether their interests were in any way injured. The mansabdars planned their lives fully knowing the existing laws affecting them, their property and their descendants.

Several cases recorded in the reign of Aurangzeb throw a welcome light on the process of zabti. On December 6, 1665, it was ordered that after settling the claims of the state whatever was left out of the escheated property of Miharban Khan be given to his descendants.[123] When Shaista Khan died, the government agent sent to take charge of his property gave away Rs. 8,000 in charity probably according to the last wishes of Shaista Khan. He was thereupon degraded on July 2, 1694.[124] In 1702 Luttaf Ullah Khan died. He owed Rs. 17,000 to the state. His elephants and horses were taken possession of by the state and the rest of his property was given to his son on October 7, 1702.[125] On November 11, 1694, the emperor bestowed the jagir of the late Janbar Khan on his descendants.[126]

Pensions

But the Mughals seem to have been more than generous to their mansabdars. Some of them at least received a pension on retirement. Muhammad Yar Khan, governor of Delhi, resigned early in 1702 and on 3 March 1702 he was given a pension of Rs. 3,000 a year.[127] Soon after, the Diwan of Delhi as well retired and on November, 1702 was given a pension of Rs. 2,000 a year.[128] Arz Khan was the fojdar and commander of the garrison at Ranthambore. He was summoned to the court on his retirement. He was too old to undertake the arduous journey to the imperial court. He had been a 500er. Rs. 4,000 a year was settled on him as his pension.[129] An old man applied for permission to retire as he could not, on account of his infirmities, discharge his duties. The permission to retire was withheld pending his attendance at court. He came. Aurangzeb satisfied himself that he was too old to continue usefully as a mansabdar (100er) and on September 23, 1703 he was given a jagir of Rs. 500 a year.[130] Aqil Khan, we learn from another source, was give a pension of Rs. 12,000 a year on retirement.[131] Tarbiat Khan, a 3000er, resigned his mansab and was granted a pension of Rs. 25,000 on October 15, 1666. Two mansabdars from Kashmir were given similar grants on May 26, 1666. Mirza Beg, a 250er, was given the revenue of a village worth Rs. 1,000 on August 24, 1681. Khwaja Musa was favoured with a grant of Rs. 20,000 on April 7, 1701. Mir Qutub-ud-in, a 400er, was given Rs. 2,000 a year on June 24, 1964. Another mansabdar of 200 was, on retirement, given a pension of Rs. 2,000 a year on June 28, 1964.[132] Pensions to the widows and the children of a deceased mansabdar are referred to in an order of Aurangzeb in the *Kalimat*.[133] The *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* mentions a pension granted to a daughter of a dead mansabdar.[134] Bernier's remarks are also worth quoting:

"The courtiers are often not even descendants of Omrahs, because, the King being heir of all their possessions, no family can long maintain its distinction, but, after the Ohrah's death, is soon extinguished, and the sons, or at least the grandsons, reduced generally, we might almost say, to beggary, and compelled to enlist as mere troopers in the cavalry of some Omrah. The King, however, usually bestows a small pension on the widow, and often on the family; and if the Omrah's life be sufficiently prolonged, he may obtain the advancement of his children by royal favour, particularly if their persons be well formed and their complexions sufficiently fair to enable them to pass for genuine Mogols."[135]

Officers' Style of Living

The mansabdars lived magnificently. "The governor or Umaras of this place when they go to a garden or court. or another place, have an escort of 30 to 40 mounted and 40 to 50 foot soldiers. Some ride while others are carried in palankeens.........The magnates of the country keep great state."[136] Daud Khan, Manucci tells us. spent Rs. 25,000 a year on his pet birds alone.[137]

Bernier tells us:

"They maintain the splendour of the court, and are never seen out-of-doors but in the most superb apparel; mounted sometimes on an elephant, sometimes on horseback, and not unfrequently in a Paleky attended by many of their cavalry, and by a large body of servants on foot, who take their station in front, and at either side, of their lord, not only to clear the way, but to flap the flies and brush off the dust with tails of peacocks; to carry the picquedent or spitoon, water to allay the Omrah's thirst. and sometimes account books, and other papers."[138]

Pelsaert's account is very interesting:

"Their mahals are adorned internally with lascivious sensuality, wanton and reckless festivity, superfluous pomp, inflated pride, and ornamental daintiness.

"I shall now speak of the houses which are built here. They are noble and pleasant, with many apartments, but there is not much in the way of an upper story except a flat roof, on which to enjoy the evening air. There are usually gardens and tanks inside the house; and in the hot weather the tanks are filled daily with fresh water, drawn by oxen from wells. The water is drawn, or sometimes raised by a wheel, in such quantity that it flows through a leaden pipe and rises like a fountain, recreation unknown in our cold country. These houses last for a few years only, because the walls are built with mud instead of mortar, but the white plaster of the walls is very noteworthy, and far superior to anything in our country. They use unslaked lime, which is mixed with milk, gum, and sugar into a thin paste. When the walls have been plastered with lime, they apply this paste, rubbing it with well-designed trowels until it is smooth; then they polish it steadily with agates, perhaps for a whole day, until it is dry and hard, and shines like alabaster, or can even be used as a looking-glass.

"They have no furniture of the kind we delight in, such as tables, stocks, benches, cupboards, bedsteads, etc.; but their cots or sleeping places, and other furniture of kinds unknown in our country, are lavishly ornamented with gold or silver, and they use more gold and silver in serving food than we do, though nearly all of it is used in the mahal, and is seen by scarcely anybody except women. Outside the mahal, there is only the diwan-khana, or sitting-place which is spread with handsome carpets, and kept very clean and neat. Here the lord takes his seat in the morning to attend to his business, whatever it is, and here all his subordinates come to salam him."[139]

Muhammad Arif Qandahari describes a lunch to which one of Akbar's officers invited the emperor. The ceremony observed, the dishes served, the carpets and curtains displayed, were all the last thing in magnificence.[140] Islam Khan, a governor of Bengal under Jahangir, is said to have spent Rs. 100,000 a year on dancing girls alone.[141] Bernier thus described a good house. "The interior of a good house has the whole floor covered with a cotton mattress four inches in thickness over which a fine white cloth is spread during the summer, a silk carpet in the winter. At the most conspicuous side of the chamber are one or two mattresses with fine covering quilted in the form of flowers and ornamented with delicate silk embrodery, interspersed with gold and silver. Each mattress has a large cushion of brocade to lean upon and there are other cushions placed round the room covered with brocade, velvet, or flowered satin....The sides of the room are full of niches, cut in a variety of shapes, in which are seen porcelain vases and flowers. The ceiling is gilt and painted."[142] Asaf Khan gave a dinner in honour of Shah Jahan. Special seats with gold and silver embroidery were provided for. In the four corners of the room were stands supporting gold vessels. Sweet perfumes were being burnt in silver scent burners. At the entrance was a water fountain. It threw scented water in a silver tub which remained half full and provided water for washing the feet and the hands of the guests. There were two seats of gold cloth, the rest of silver. The dinner lasted four hours. At the end Asaf Khan presented three gold vessels full of precious stones worth seven hundred thousand rupees.[143] Mandelslo thus bears witness to their splendour: "There is no king in Europe that has so noble a court as the governor of Gujarat, nor any that appears in public with greater magnificence."[144]

Income Tax Deductions

The Mughal officials did not pay any ordinary taxes. No income tax as such seems to have been levied but the principle of it was certainly practised as large deductions were made out of the salaries of public servants. In the shape of 'fraction of two dams', 'expenses of minting', 'days of moon's rise', and the 'maintenance expenses for imperial stables', the public servants paid from their salaries as follows:

1.	Two *dams* (an income tax)	.. 5 to 10 per cent
2.	Minting charges ..	..1½ " 1¼ per cent
3.	Days of moon's rise	..3.3.%
4.	Imperial stables (from those above 400er) ..	

These deductions may well be considered the income tax paid by the public servants.

The jagirdars usually paid these taxes after realizing their income from their jagirs. This sometimes created difficulties. On July 18, 1702 we find the emperor ordering the bakhshis to deduct the last tax from the jagirs outright[145] *i.e.*, to decrease the jagirs of the mansabdars by the amount of the tax. This seems to have been applicable to the mansabdars below 2000. On June 17, 1703 an order was given that mansabdars of 2000 and above be ordered to keep agents at the court who should be responsible for the payment of the fodder tax.[146]

A rather curious custom existed with regard to tips. When the emperor was very much pleased with a mansabdar or when a mansabdar was appointed to a high office, it was customary to send a dish from the imperial table to him. This 'gracious sign of imperial pleasure' cost the recipient about Rs. 100 which he had to pay to the messenger who brought the dish. The tip received was credited to the imperial treasury; sometimes if the emperor was pleased he allowed the messenger to retain the whole or a part thereof. Sometimes the tips were returned to their givers.[147] Jahangir remitted the bridle money which every public servant had to pay when he was given a horse or an elephant as a present.[148]

Apart from these taxes the public servants had to make valuable presents to the emperor. An imperial audience always involved the presentation of something that would interest the emperor. On the new year's days and the birth-days of the emperor every public servant had to make a present to the empedor. Of course the emperor also never forgot them. Gifts from the royal treasury were often sent on auspicious occasions to all public servants.

Office Hours

There were standing office orders regulating the procedure in the offices. All heads of departments were required to be present in their offices till midday whereas their subordinates had to attend office till the afternoon.[149] Then, as now, sometimes officials would like to transact theid business at their own homes. This was strictly forbidden.[150]

Mansabdari as a Military System

The mansabdar system was a method of organizing the royal military forces as well. It originated in the imperial need to define the number of men every military officer was to keep. Within eight years this broke down and a divergence appeared between the personal numerical rank of a mansabdar and the number of soldiers he led to the field. This at last compelled Akbar in his forty-second year to create grades in the same rank according to the number of soldiers an officer actually commanded.[151] The word 'Swar' was not a technical term. It simply described a fact. A panj hazari hazar swar did not imply two separate offices of a mansabdar. It simply implied that the official was paid the salary of a 5000er and was expected to bring into the field one thousand soldiers. How long this continued we do not know. Akbar seems to have enforced his own regulations and insisted by means of branding of horses and descriptive rolls of men that the public servants actually maintained the contingent they were supposed to lead and were paid for from the treasury. Moreland has suggested that during the general laxity in administration on Jahangir's accession these rules came to be violated and the public servants did not keep the number of horses they were paid for.[152] The accounts of Jahangir's reign however do not bear this out entirely. Of course we have the suggestive fact that when on the submission of Rana Amar Singh, the mansab of 5000er and 5000 horse was conferred on Karn, all that was stipulated was that the Rana should keep at the imperial court a contingent of 1500 hores.[153] We have to remember, however, that the position of the Rana of Udaipur was peculiar; alone of all the Rajas of Hindustan he refused to advance his fortune by serving on the staff of the Mughal emperor. The rank conferred on him simply represented a 'book account'. He submitted to the Mughal emperor. So his territory in theory became imperial. It was given back to him by creating him a jagirdar of these very districts of his own. The contingent of 1500 hores had to be maintained by him out of his own revenue. So the fact that Karn, though a panch hazari with 5000 soldiers, was to lead only 1500 hores need not have much significance. There are other cases as well where we have mansabdars almost maintaining the number for which they were paid. We can only say that some laxity may have set in during his reign

In the reign of Shah Jahan, salaries of personal ranks and those given on behalf of soldiers maintained were lessened by 25 per cent. This seems to have been done in the eleventh year of his reign. We have a table of salaries dated April 25, 1638 preserved in the *Farhang-i-Kardani.*[154] This proves however that the actual decrease was much larger. Shah Jahan issued general regulations for the purpose of legalizing the departure between the swar rank of an officer and his command. It was decided that if a mansabdar had his jagir in the same province he was to bring one-third of his nominal command (swar) to the muster, other-wise one-fourth. To the expeditions sent outside India only one-fifth of the number of soldiers indicated by the swar rank were to be brought to the field.[155]

Under Aurangzeb this regulation seems to have been continued. Aurangzeb generally required his officers to get one-fifth the number of the swars indicated by their swar ranks branded.[156] But this only indicated the lowest limit of the scale. Some mansabdars, however were asked to bring one-fourth the number of their swar rank.[157] We have Firoz Jung, a haft hazari (7000er, 7000 horse) bringing into the field a contingent of 3426 horse and 3250 foot on November 20, 1072.[158] A humbler public servant holding the rank of 500er and 500 horse had a contingent of 200 horse and 300 foot.[159] Tarbiat Khan led a contingent of horse where the total number of soldiers indicated by the swar rank was 12850. According to the above he should have led 2570 horses, whereas we find him leading 4069 soldiers.[160]

Thus the Mughal state, in order to enforce its rights without putting the mansabdars to too great an inconvenience, adopted various methods of covering some of its institutional fictions. A man may be asked to have 500 swars ready but be actually paid for them anything from a month's to a full year's salary.[164] Under such varying conditions, by a rather complicated system of accounting the Mughal emperors must have secured that they paid only for the number of soldiers actually led by their public servants. They were too clever to suffer such a fraud as to pay a public servant for 1000 horses whereas he was expected to bring into the field only 200. They must have secured that they paid no more than the salary due for the maximus the leader was expected to bring into the field. As suggested above a very easy method of securing it was by paying the officers for a shorter number of months than 12.

Actual practice shows that the Mughal emperor paid for the number of soldiers a mansabdar got branded. An imperial order issued on August 31, 1703 laid down that the mansabdars should have their horses branded and receive from the superintendent in charge of these operations the *dagh nama*. This was to be sent to the emperor who would grant a jagir according to the *dagh nama*.[161] *i.e.* according to the number of horses the mansabdar had got branded. If this represents the general practice of the period, it is clear that the Mughal emperors only paid for the horses that the mansabdar got branded.

But under Aurangzeb branding of horses came to be very much at a discount. On August 19, 1694 an order was issued that all Rajput chiefs holding the rank of 2000er or above need not have their horses branded.[163] Later on all Mughal officials were excused *dagh* if their ranks were above 3000.[164] In the south under the constant warfare to which the mansabdars were subjected, it seemed most of the higher public servants got themselves excused from branding their horses.[165]

The Army

The army that the mansabdars made available for imperial service was a heterogeneous collection. It represented a grouping together of isolated units rather than a well-organized fighting machine. In 1637 there were 8000 mansabdars and 1,85,000 horsemen ready for service under Shah Jahan.[166] These 1,85,000 horsemen owed allegiance to their own individual commanders. When a military expedition was sent, its members acknowledged the officer appointed as the commander-in-chief as their leader but there was always a want of cohesion among the various leaders. Personal jealousies, mutual bickering, difficulties about nice points of precedence, many a time created, and added to, the difficulties of the Mughals. Under such conditions no team work could be expected. We find this illustrated in the Mughal expeditions sent to various parts of Bengal under Jahangir and in the armies sent across the frontier to conquer Qandahar. Balkh, and Badakhshan.[167] Every commander wanted to distinguish himself rather than make the expedition successful.

The numbers the Mughal emperor could bring into the field or did actually bring cannot be definitely ascertained. If the figures of Akbar's reign as given in the *Ain* are to be our guide 138 living mansabdars of 500 and above in about 1590 could have been asked to bring into the field a force of 2,03,850 horse.

Total Cost of the Services

The amount spent by the Mughal emperors in maintaining their public services cannot be easily estimated. Here we have to remember that jagirs and the cash salaries granted to mansabdars were not payment for the salaries of the pubilc servants alone. The mansabdars were paid for their military contingents as well. Taking the rates of salaries in Akbar's time when the *Ain* was compiled, Akbar's public servants cost the State Rs. 1,59,53,950 a year.

Mughal Nobility?

The nature of the mansabdar organization has often been misunderstood. Contemporary European observers discovered in the jagirs a superficial resemblance to the feudal organization of government in Europe and handed down the tradition that the mansabdars were great feudal nobles. As we have already seen they were nothing of the kind. They had no rights in the land except to collect the land revenue due to the state in lieu of their salaries fixed in cash. Their jagirs imposed on them no other duties and were frequently changed. As we have seen above a very large number of public servants received salaries in cash. Whatever its origin, in its later stages a mansab by itself did not involve any military duties. It was only when a public servant was specifically asked to maintain and was paid for a certain number of men that he became a military leader. Otherwise he was a public servant paid so much a month in terms of his contract. Whereas feudalism created a hereditary class based on the accident of an ancestor having rendered some notable service to the monarchy, the Mughal mansabdar was a public servent paid for his own actual worth to the state rather than that of some far-off ancestor of his. A Mughal public servant was paid a salary—cash or jagir—only so long as he was in service.

It has been customary to speak of the Mughal 'nobles'. The practice started in the pages of European writers. They were familiar with the administration in their own countries run by nobles. When Persian texts came to be translated, public servant in general were found in them divided into three classes, mansabdars. Amirs, and Umrai Kabir. The last two classes came to be comprehended in the term nobles and were thus translated. It is a correct literary translation but it mars the technical sense involved in the two terms. If we use the modern terminology and call the three divisions as a Subordinate Service, a Provincial Service, and an All-India Service we would be conveying the contents of these terms better. In no sense did they form a nobility. We may as well call the Indian Civil Servants nobles! The Mughal system was averse to creating any distinctions by birth. As genius could not be ordinarily handed down by father to son, the Mughal emperors refused to go out of their way and recognize any rights of the sons to positions in the public services on account of the services of their fathers and relatives. Herein, if they departed from the contemporary European and Asiatic standards, they came very near modern methods of recruitment of the services. If there were no public competitive examinations, the way was open to talent to catch the emperor's eye and find an opportunity to serve the state.

Criticism of the System

Much of the criticism of the Mughal public services was inspired by wrong analogies. Some of the charges levelled against the system can as well be levelled against the organization of most public services in the world today. That it was not hereditary, as Bernier lamented, was an advantage rather than a shortcoming. That the state levied a death duty which might sometimes amount to the confiscation of the entire estate of a mansabdar meant redistribution of wealth. It has yet to be proved by definite examples that the descendants of any mansabdar were actually left in want as the result of the operation of the system of zabti. We have already seen that under Akbar the surplus of the estate after realizing the state dues was handed over to the successors of the bereaved family. Jahangir repeated these orders. Those who lament that the zabti made it impossible for a strong nobility (?) to arise seen to be overlooking several important factors. A nobility of birth is never an unmixed blessing and it has yet to be proved that it would have ensured better results in India than it did elsewhere. As it was, the disintegration of the Mughal empire was partly due to its overmighty public servants. Is it contended that, had they been stronger, they would have proved more useful (to themselves or the Mughal empire)?

High Salaries

The Mughal public servants were paid inordinately high salaries for a country where living was so cheap. Most of their allowances, however, were usually spent in the country. Whatever the land of their orgin, the public servants made India their home. The example of the emperor made them live in a style which usually made them run into debt. Most of their money was spent on their huge harems in which they delighted. Yet many of them were keen students and patronized all sorts of studies. We have Bernier's employer who even in camp could not do without his study of Greak Philosophy. There was Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan whose patronage of men of learning gives him a unique place among public servants, ancient and modern. There were others under whose wings painting, music, dancing, architecture and other arts found a shelter. They encouraged trade and industry. If an imported article caught their fancy, it was always their desire to have it matched here in India. Their demands made the royal workshops in various parts of the country work overtime.

Deterioration in Services

In the later stages several new evils appeared in the system. Akbar had made several experiments in appointing joint holders of a single office. As his biographer tells us, the experiment was meant for providing a man on the spot if the governor happened to be called to the court or fell ill. Unner Aurangzeb however joint commands of expeditions were used for the purpose of making the colleogues spy on each other. This sapped all sense of responsibility among them. Worse than this was the system of multiple offices which was favoured by Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. To begin with, the princes, but later on others in high favour, were appointed to hold at one and the same time a plurality of offices. They could hold some of them only by appointing deputies. This blocked the path of advancement to real talent. When an officer was appointed to hold more than one office he appointed as his deputies his own men rather than promote men of ability from among other public servants. Sons, brothers, or other relatives were usually appointed to discharge the routine duties of some of the minor offices thus combined. These duputies possessed no initiative. As the subtantive holder of the office alone was responsible to the emperor they had to depend on him for orders on every major issue arising in administration. The Mughal need for providing for princes in the mansabdar system blocked the way to talent among commoners. The princes were given fanciful mansabs—Dara was a 40,000er—which could only be justified by giving them several jobs together, thus making it impossible for other talented persons to come to the top. Aurangzeb's suspicious nature and the over-centralization of government which he practised further killed initiative and sense of responsibility among his public servants. Loyalty to the throne was often destroyed by the rebellions in which the Mughal princes indulged so frequently. During the princely rebellions, the Mughal mansabdars developed the habit of safeguarding their own interests even at the cost of loyalty to the reigning sovereign. A rebel prince of today could blossom forth into a reigning monarch tomorrow. It was necessary to be on the winning side. Thus began the tradition which later on led to the emergence of successor states to the Mughal empire founded by its own servants.

APPENDIX I

The salaries drawn by the mansabdars of the highest grade of various ranks in the reigns of Akbar, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb are shown below:

No.	Rank	Akbar[168]	Shah Jahan (1638)[169]	Aurangzeb[170]
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1	10	1,200	..	..
2	20	1,620	1,000	1,000
3	30	2,100	1,375	1,375
4	40	2,676	1,750	1,750
5	50	3,000	..	..
6	60	3,612	2,500	2,500
7	80	4,920	3,500	3,500
8	100	8,400	5,000(?)	5,000
9	120	8,940	..	..
10	150	10,500	..	6,250
11	200	11,700	..	7,500
12	250	13,800	9,500	..
13	300	16,800	10,000	10,000
14	350	17,400	..	..
15	400	24,000	12,500	12,500
16	500	30,000	20,000	20,000
17	600	32,240	23,750	23,750
18	700	52,800	27,500	27,500
19	800	60,000	31,500	31,200
20	900	92,400	37,500	37,500
21	1000	98,400	50,000	50,000
22	1200	1,10,800	..	..
23	1250	..	..	..
24	1500	1,20,000	..	75,000
25	2000	1,44,000	1,00,000	1,00,000
26	2500	1,68,000	1,25,000	1,25,000
27	3000	2,04,000	1,50,000	1,50,000
28	3500	2,28,000	..	1,75,000
29	4000	2,64,000	2,00,000	2,00,000
30	4500	3,12,000	..	2,25,000
31	5000	3,60,000	2,50,000	2,50,000
32	6000	..	3,00,000	3,00,000
33	7000	5,60,000	3,50,000	3,50,000
34	8000	..	4,00,000	..
35	9000	..	4,50,000	..

APPENDIX II

The following table records the existing grades and the number of officers holding them in the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb:

No.	Rank	Akbar	Jahangir	Shah Jahan			Aurangzeb
				1637	1647	Total No.	
1	10	224	110	..	..	..	..
2	20	250	232	..	..	..	..
3	30	39	240	..	..	..	..
4	40	260	290	..	..	..	..
5	50	16	..	..	..	..	..
6	60	204	397	..	..	..	..
7	80	91	245	..	..	..	..
8	100	250	300	..	..	..	..
9	120	1	..	..	..	..	..
10	150	53	242	..	..	..	..
11	200	81	150	..	..	..	..
12	250	12	85	..	..	..	..
13	300	33	72	..	..	..	..
14	350	19	58	..	..	..	..
15	400	18	73	..	..	..	..
16	500	29 (+5 ?)	80	111	101	180	..
17	600	4	..	32	25	57	..
18	700	18	58	36	52	79	..
19	800	2	..	37	30	80	..
20	900	19 (+3 ?)	..	14	16	290	..
21	1000	2 (+2 ?)	55	40	70	136	48
22	1200	..	..	..	..	..	..
23	1250	..	..	..	..	..	..
24	1500	6 (+1 ?)	51	30	35	72	33
25	2000	2 (+3 ?)	45	39	51	60	40
26	2500	4 (+1 ?)	42	12	5	24	19
27	3000	5	36	26	34	55	34
28	3500	2	30	..	..	1	22
29	4000	2	25	18	10	34	25
30	4500	2	9	..	..	..	..
31	5000	7	8	15	15	32	27
32	6000	..	..	4	2	7	14

No.	Rank	Akbar	Jahangir	Shah Jahan			Aurangzeb
				1637	1647	Total No.	
33	7000	..	1	..	..	9	15
34	8000	..	..	..	..	..	..
35	9000	..	..	1	..	1	..
Total no. of Officers of 1000 and above		51 (+7 ?)	302	185	222	401	277
Total no. of Officers of 500 and above		123 (+15 ?)	438	405	446	117	..
Grand Total		1658	2064				

These figures are based on the *Ain-i-Akbari*,[171] *Pelsaert's Account of India*,[172] the *Badshah Nama*,[173] the *Amal-i-Salih*[174] and the *Dastur-ul-Amal*.[175] The *Ain* and the *Badshah Nama* nention all officers dead and living who were holding various ranks or had ever held them. The figures given in the table above include only the officials who were living at the time these accounts were compiled. That will provide a working basis for a comparison. Pelsaert's account is headed 'Roll of the Umras and Mansabdars, from the highest to the lowest, who after Akbar's death, entered Jahangir's service and were enumerated and entered in the royal register.' This seems to imply that it includes only such mansabdars as were actually appointed to hold these offices on Jahangir's accession.

NOTES

1. Cf. *Humayun Nama* by Khwandmir.

2. See Chapter XVI below.

3. *Akbar Nama,* II, 270.

4. Cf. Moreland in the *JRAS* for October 1936.

5. *Ain.*, I, 279, 280.

6. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari,* list of Mansabdars at the end.

7. *Ain.*, I, 217 to 228.

8. The table in the *Ain.* has 100 lines (*qitar*) of camels and 20 lines (*qitar*) of mules. A line of each has been elsewhere defined in the *Ain*.

9. *Akbar Nama.* III, 117.

10. I have adopted this method of translating the *zat* rank originally suggested by Mr. Moreland.

11. *Amal-i-Salih,* list of mansabdars at the end.

12. The *News Letter* speak of a cook (May, 1659), a physician (November 18, 1692), and a Superintendent of the Ajmer Mausoleum of Salim Chisti (June 21, 1694) as holding offices of various ranks in Aurangzeb's reign

13. *Akbar Nama,* III, 671.

14. *Ain.,* I, 217 to 228.

15. *Akbar Nama,* III, 034, 836, 837.

16. *Ain.*, I, 217 to 228.

17. *Government of India Act,* 328.

18. The list reproduced above seems to differ from the one copied by Irvine from the *Ain-i-Akbari.* Irvine has not translated the word *qitar* used in connexion with mules and camels. As stated elsewhere in the *Ain,* a *qitar* of camels included 5 camels and that of mules consisted of 5 mules.

19. The *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* of Nathan contains several references to the staff officers of a governor, cf. the English abstract published by the present writer in the *Journal of Indian History* as 'Bengal under Jehangir', XIII.

20. *Indian at the Death of Akbar* by Moreland, 114. Cf. *Indian Economic Life* by Brij Narain.

21. *Order in Council* (Governors' salaries and expenses), 1937.

22. No salary is shown for this rank in the Table of Salaries which gives salaries for many other appointments which were never made.

23. List of mansabdars in the *Ain*.

24. *Akbar Nama,* III, 839.

25. *Memoirs,* I, 164, 285, 289.

26. Jahangir is silent about the rank Man Singh occupied in his reign. He simply tells us that he continued Man Singh in the place which he held at the time of his accession.

27. *Memoirs,* II, 83, 282, 237, 77, 202, 197 makes references to the appointments in the grades of 550, 750, 1200, 1300, 1400, 180, and officers of 6000 are mentioned on pp., I, 239, 268, 280; II, 232, 243 and 258. Appointments made in the rank of 7000 are referred to in I, pp. 320 and 333 and II, A, 66. The rank of 2500 was very common and is mentioned in I, 4, II, 90, 91, 153 and 232. Officers of 600, 800, and 900 are mentioned in I, 164, 285, and 289.

28. *Badshah Nama,* and *Amal-i-Salih,* as cited above.

The ranks of 10, 50, 120, 150, 200 and 350 are not found in the Table of Salaries in the Manual of Administration (Rampuri). The lists of Mansabdars in the *Badshah Nama* and the *Amal-i-Salih* mention no appointments to the rank of 12000, 1250, 3500 and 4500.

29. The lists of Mansabdars in the *Badshah Nama* and the *Amal-i-Salih* contain no names in the rank.

30. *Farhang-i-Kardani* (f. 21a to 23b) mentions the following ranks held by officials; 6000, 5000, 4500, 4000, 3500, 3000, 2500, 2000, 1500, 1000, 900, 800, 700, 600, 500, 400, 300, 250, 200, 150, 100, 80, 60, 50, 40, 30 and 20. Of course we have the ranks of 7000, 8000, 9000, 12000, 15000, 20000, 25000, 30000, 35000, 40000, 45000, 50000 also mentioned but these were usually held—if at all—by the princes.

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31. *Badshah Nama,* II, p. 715.
Zawabat-i-Alamgiri, f. 15a.

32. *Ain-i-Akbari,* Blochman, I, 239.

33. The list compiled by the writer of the *Dastur-ul-Amal* used available histories alone. It mentions 52 Hindu mansabdars of 1000 and above whereas 116 such Hindu mansabdars are known to have been appointed. Cf. *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors* by the present writer.

34. *Memoirs,* I, 25.

35. *Ibid.,* I, 51.

36. *Ibid.,* I, 374.

37. *Ibid.,* I, 260.

38. *Ibid.,* I, 335.

39. *Ibid.,* II, 337.

40. *Ibid.,* II, 22.

41. *Ibid.,* II, 61.

42. In the year 31 of Akbar, Abul Fazl who was a commander of 1000 (*Akbar Nama,* III, 457) was appointed Joint-governor of the province of Delhi (*Akbar Nama,* III, 511). Raja Askarn, Joint-governor of Agra, was also a commander of 1000. *Akbar Nama,* III, 457 and 511.

43. Cf. the present writer's *Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors* and the authorities cited therein.

44. *Ain-i-Akbari,* I, list of mansabdars.

45. *Court Bulletin* dated December 23, 1702.

46. *Ibid.,* 15-1-1703 mentions such an officer holding the rank of 250, whereas *Court Bulletin* dated 27-8-1705 mentions one holding the rank of 300.

47. *Ibid,* 18-1-1702 mentions a News-writer of the office of Khan-i-Saman holding the rank of 300. A Sawanih Niagar of the province is mentioned as a commander of 100 and the News-writers of Atawah and Surat as commanders of 250.

48. *Ibid.,* 5-1-1703.

49. *Ibid.,* 3-9-93.

50. *Ibid.,* 27-10-1702.

51. *Ibid.,* 13-11-1702.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*, 27-11-1704.

54. *Ibid.*, 26-11-1705.

55. *Ibid.*, 17-10-1702 and 27-10-1702.

56. *Ibid.*, 10-2-1704.

57. *Ibid.*, 16-2-1704.

58. One of them was an officer of 700 (*Ibid.*, 14-11-1704); the Principal Bakhshi was a commander of 1000 (*Ibid.*, 17-11-1702). A third Bakhshi No. 2 of the Ahdis is also mentioned.

59. *Ibid.*. 29-4-1703.

60. *Ibid.*, 13-2-1704.

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*, 11-1-1705.

63. A Sadr of Province of Malwa was an officer of 500.

64. *Court Bulletin*, 30-1-1703.

65. *Ibid.*, 18-1-1704.

66. *Ibid.*, 7-9-1704.

67. *Ibid.*

Superintendent of the Beds,	(400).	10-7-1702.
„ „ Rosaries,	(400).	14-7-1702.
„ „ Dishes,	(400).	1-7-1694.
„ „ Lamps,	(200).	9-7-1694.
„ „ „	(300).	21-7-1702.
„ „ Fruitry,	(600).	2-10-1702.
Karori of Elephants,	(400).	7-10-1702.
Superintendent of Royal Dinks,	(1000).	27-10-1702.
„ „ Ras Khana,	(300).	29-2-1705.
„ „ Dahandi Khana,	(250).	17-5-1703.
„ „ Stores,	(150).	28-6-1704.
„ „ Maidservants and Randar Khana,	(2500).	8-8-1704.

68. *Ibid.*, 31-7-1681.

69. *Ibid.*, 23-6-1694.

70. *Ibid.*, 31-9-1704.

71. *Ibid.*, 19-7-1694.

72. *Ibid.*, 14-11-1702.

73. *Ibid.*, 17-4-1695.

74. *Ibid.,* 23-12-1702.
75. *Ibid.,* 21-2-1704.
76. *Ibid.,* 30-1-1703.
77. *Ibid.,* 9-12-1694.
78. *Ibid.*, 10-10-1704.
79. *IbidL,* 2-8-1694.
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.,* 29-12-1703.
82. *Ibid.,* 17-9-1704.
83. Cf. the present writer's *Religious Policy of Aurangzeb.*
84. *Court Bulletin,* 25-3-1703.
85. *Ibid.,* 11-1-1705.
86. *Ibid.,* for the years 1681, 1694, 1672.
87. *Ibid.,* 15-4-1696.
88. *Ibid.,* 18-11-1702.
89. *Ibid.,* 12-4-1704.
90. *IbidL,* 29-9-1704.
91. *Ibid.*, 14-10-1704.
92. *Ibid.,* 18-11-1692.
93. *Ibid.*, a second Bakhshi in Kabul and a Bakhshi of the Ahdis in Kabul is referred to in the *Court Bulletin* dated February 12, 1701. Salabat Khan is spoken of as first Mir-i-Tuzak on December 12, 1692, presumably because there were others as well. A Mir Bakhshi of Ahdis is mentioned on October 29, 1699.
94. *Court Bulletin,* October 10, 1669; March 27, 1671, May 6, 1693.
95. In the *Tuzak* Jahangir mentions several such cases.
96. *'Bengal under Jehangir'* in *J. I. H.,* XIII. p. 9.
97. *Ibid,* records many such quarrels.
98. On April 27, 1700 the Fojdar of Sator who was a 1500er was given kettle drums. *Court Bulletin* of the same date.
99. *Court Bulletin,* 14-2-1703.
100. *Ibid.*, 14-12-93 and 22-1-94.
101. *Letters,* No. 16.
102. *Zawabat-i-Alamgiri* MS., 15a.

103. Khafi Khan, II, 550, 551.
104. *Akbar Nama,* III, 587 and 747.
105. *Jaipur Records,* Vol. VIII.
106. *Court Bulletin,* 4-9-1669, 26-8-1696, and 6-6-1700.
107. *Jaipur Recorls,* 10-2-1704.
108. *Court Bulletin,* 10-2-1704.
109. *Ibid.,* 19-3-1704.
110. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri,* 160.
111. *Adab-i-Alamgiri,* 72b.
112. *Akbar Nama,* III, 595.
113. *Ibid.,* III, 648.
114. De Jongh MS., pp. 24 and 25.
115. A Kharwar is an ass load.
116. *Court Bulletio,* 23-8-1703.
117. *Ruqat-i-Hasan,* 48, 49.
118. *Jaipur Records,* VIII, 160 to 174.
119. *Haft Anjaman,* Part I, letter from Rustam Khan to Shah Jahan.
120. *Travels of Abdul Latif,* f. 11, 12.

Akbad had also issued similar orders earlier. The property of those who owed nothing to the State was not to be attached. *Mirat,* I, 185.

121. *Ovington,* 197.

Cf. Hawkins, 104, 105, 112; Terry, 326, 327; Bernier, 5, 65, 164, 165, 212; Tavernier, 18; Manucci, I, 205; Roe, 89; Pelsaert, Mandelslo, 38; Ovington, 197.

122. *Travels,* 17.
123. *Court Bulletin,* 6-12-65.
124. *Ibid.,* 27-7-1694.
125. *Ibid.,* 7-10-1702.
126. *Ibid.,* 11-11-94.
127. *Ibid.,* 3-3-1702.
128. *Ibid.,* 2-11-1702.
129. *Ibid.,* 28-12-1703.
130. *Ibid.,* 23-9-1703.
131. *Kalimat,* 167.
132. *Court Bulletins* of the dates mentioned in the text.

133. *Kalimat,* 91.
134. *Ahkam,* 16(a).
135. Bernier, 211.
136. De Jongh, 27.
137. Manucci, IV, 255; Thevenot, 44.
138. Bernier, 21.
139. Pelsaert, 66.
140. Muhammad Arif Quandahari, pp. 216 to 226.
141. *Subh Sadiq,* 1980a.
142. Bernier, 248.
143. Manrique, 11, 213 to 219.
144. Mandelslo, 48.
145. *Court Bulletin,* 18-7-1702.
146. *Ibid.,* 17-6-1703.
147. *Ibid.*, 2-7-1702, 23-7-1702, 5-2-1703, 27-5-66
148. *Memoirs,* I, 40.
149. *Court* Bulletin, 23-3-1702.
150. *Ibid.,* 6-9-1681.
151. *Akbar Nama,* III, 671.
152. *J. R. A. S.*, October, 1936.
153. Cf. *Vir Vinod* for Jahangir's Farman conferring on Karn the rank mentioned above.
154. *Farhang,* 21a to 23b. Cf. Appendix A.
155. *Mirat,* I, 228, 229.
156. *Cour Bulletins,* 26-12-76, 6-5-1702.
157. *Ibid.*, 20-9-1702.
158. *Ibid..* 20-9-1702.
159. *Ibid.,* 17-6-1704.
160. *Ibid.,* 6-7-1704.
161. *Farhang,* 24a.
162. *Court Bulletin,* 31-8-1703.

Earlier on June 26, 1703 when the Superintendent of Branding had reported about the shortage of men in Bihar, orders were given to realize the excess money paid to the Mansabdars.

163. *Court Bulletin,* 19-8-1694.
164. *Ibid.*
165. *Court Bulletins* are full of such orders.
166. *Badshah Nama,* II, 715.

167. Cf. *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* and *Latif--ul-Akhabar* for the quarrels that disfigured the conduct of Mughal expeditions to Bengal and Qandahar.

168. *Ain.,* 217 to 228.

169. *Dastur-ul-Amal* (Rampuri).

170. *Ibid,,* 44b quoted bp Irvine in *The Army of the Indian Mughals,* p. 8. Cf. *Farhang-i-Kardani,* 21a to 23b which gives salaries for the ranks of 50 and 250 as well. The salaries of the officers above 1000 are also given in the *Farhang*. We know however that no appointments beyond 6000 were made.

171. *Ain-i-Akbari,* I, 279 and ff. Abul Fazl records more than 2000 Mansabdars, dead and alive. The numbers entered in the table above represent the total number of Mansabdars who were alive at the time the *Ain* was compiled.

172. *A Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India,* Brij Narain and Sri Ram Sharma, 34, 35.

173. *Badshah Nama,* Vol. I, Part II, pp. 292 to 328 (for 1637). Vol. II, pp. 717 to 752 (for 1647) .The figures above refer only to the Mansabdars who were alive in 1637 and 1647.

174. *Amal-i-Salih,* list of Mansabdars at the end of the volume.

175. *Dastur-ul-Amal,* Bankipur, 148b to 152b.

CHAPTER IX

THE MUGHAL ARMY

Composition of the Army

The Mughal army was composed of several types of arms. The most numerous was the cavalry. The infantry numbered very high on paper, but its militarily important part was the musketeers. The heavy artillery was mostly used in sieges; but Babur had used it in open warfare and his sucessors kept up the practice. The elephants had formed a part of the Indian army from times immemorial. Even the Mughals found them useful. Campaigning in Bihar and Bengal necessitated the maintenance of a large number and variety of boats for military purposes.

The Cavalry

The cavalry was made up of three types of contingents. There were the mansabdars who, as we have seen above, undertook to bring to the field a certain number of soldiers indicated by the swar rank or otherwise in their warrant of appointment. Another contingent consisted of the soldiers provided by the feudatory princes for imperial service. The third group consisted of Ahdis, gentlemen-troopers, usually owing obedience to no one else but to the king. The contingents of the mansabdars furnished the most numerous part of the cavalry. In theory even State contingents were contingents of their mansabdar princes. As we have seen above the mansabdars were organized in different ranks ranging from the commanders of 10 to those of 7000. In every rank there were three grades depending on the ratio between the zat and the swar rank of the commander. The actual number of troops brought into the field by the mansabdars was at first indicated by their command. Towards the end of Akbar's reign, the swar rank denoted the number of soldiers a commander was expected to bring into the field. Later on, under Jahangir and his successors, a commander was expected to furnish one-third of his swar rank in northern India, one-fourth in the Deccan, and one-fifth for service outside India in campaigns beyond the Indus. The contingents of the feudatory princes were fixed by treaties. Some princes offered to serve as Mughal mansabdars rather than rule over their own territories. In their case, the number of soldiers was fixed according to regulations applicable to other mansabdars.

The contingents of mansabdars were self-contained. They included no smaller units within them and were not themselves parts of any other bigger group. They were not brought together except on the battlefield. Actually a mansabdar commanding 1000 soldiers would assemble them all in a pell mell fashion. They were not officially divided into any smaller units. They acknowledged no inferior commanders among themselves. There was only one officer—the mansabdar; all others were the rank and file. Thus the number of military officers in proportion to the entire military strength of the empire was lower than it is today. It is necessary to remember that the total strength of the mansabdars in various reigns formed no indication of the number of military commanders. Quite a large part of the strength of the mansabdars with commands below 200 under Akbar and below 500 later on, was used for clerical, police, revenue, public works and industrial and commercial services. The accounts of various expeditions organized by imperial orders do not often include mansabdars below 500ers. Some accounts of provincial governments and administration that we possess do sometimes indicate the employment of smaller mansabdars in local expeditions. They seem to have acted more often as military police or ordinary constables. The thanadars and fojdars (military) that were employed in the battlefield or for garrison duty do not seem to have ever belonged to the ranks below that of 200ers. It is thus arguable that the ratio of military officers to the rank and file in the fighting forces was much lower than it is today. There was nothing to correspond to the non-commissioned officer of today—it would be useless to see in the Mughal mansabdars anything like the commissioned officers of modern armies. Their contingents in their internal organization resembled feudal levies more than anything else.

Equipment

Every soldier had his own horse, arms and equipment Among the offensive weapons swords of various kinds, daggers of different shapes and sizes, maces, axes, spears and bows and arrows are mentioned. Usually a soldier had only one mount but contingents of some mansabdars have been regularly described as *do-aspa, sih aspa.* Here the soldiers—whether all or only a part of them—had one or two spare mounts with them. The salaries of the *do-aspa, sih-aspa* soldiers were proportionately larger.

The defensive armour used has been very well describcribed in the *Ain*. Every soldier possessed a shield which was much smaller than that of the feudal knights. Probably all the soldiers rode to battle with an iron helmet on their head. The defensive armour described in detail in the *Ain* and covering every part of the body would hardly have been available to ordinary soldiers. The paintings of the period depict the soldiers well clad and well protected; but the iron mask for the face and the head, the four-pieced armour plate, the iron doublet the robe worn over the ordinary breast-plate, the steel stockings and the iron glove do not seem to have been used by all the soldiers. The commanders rode to battle on elephants protected in the howdah; when they used the horse, it was very carefully protected. The neck, the chest, and the back of the horse were all very well covered.

Discipline

No arrangements were made to train or discipline the soldiers. There were no regular daily drills to keep the soldiers in peace time up to the mark. When a commander was present at the capital or was in the imperial camp, he took his turn for a week's duty in mounting guard. He paraded his troops for imperial review under the *jharoka darshan*. When the Mughal army marched to battle, sometimes defensive works were thrown up and every night a contingnt was told off to mount guard. This provided some sort of activity. The playing of *chaugan* kept the horses active. There may have been regular or irregular marches in the garrison towns or in the country round about, as was the custom in some States till recently. It is necessary to remember that every Mughal commander usually occupied a substantive post in the administration beside enjoying his military command. Such administrative posts very often kept their contingents busy, in police or military police duties, or drew them out for suppressing local disturbances occurring at the time of revenue collection. The formal Mughal conquest of many new territories involved long-drawn local engagements about which probably we would have known nothing if we did not possess some Memoirs. The task of occupying a newly conquered territory and the duty of consolidating Mughal authority in such areas called for the continuous occupation of almost all the soldiers stationed therein. They would thus be kept on active duty, necessitating some sort of preparedness among them. The *Qumargah* hunts of Balban when he kept from two to three thousand soldiers engaged were considered by his contemporaries a means of keeping his soldiers up to the mark. The Mughal *Qumargah* hunt may have served a similar purpose. The march of the soldiers in attendance upon the emperor travelling for peaceful purposes also served to keep the soldiers active.

Payment of Salaries

A roll of soldiers employed by the mansabdars was kept. Akbar introduced the custom of taking detailed descriptions of all the soldiers paid for from the treasury. The *chahra,* as it was called, secured that a mansabdar brought to imperial service soldiers of approved physique. Every horse carried a double brand, an imperial sign and the first word in the name of his commander. These contingents were reviewed once a year, though Aurangzeb excused this obligation to all the 2000ers and above in the Deccan. It was only when the bakshi had sent in a certificate to the treasury certifying 'all correct' with regard to both men and horses that a mansabdar was allowed to draw his own salary as well as the money due to him for the salaries of the soldiers serving under him. Thus no mansabdar could draw a higher amount for salaries on account of his soldiers than their actual strength warranted.

The soldiers thus received their salaries from the mansabdars. They in their turn seem to have been paid twice a year from the treasury when they drew cash salaries. When they were given jagirs they were able to collect the revenue therefrom twice a year. Thus the mansabdars were not in a position to pay their contingents oftener than once in six months. Naturally the salaries were very often in arrears. When the mansabdar was on an expedition away from his jagir, he could only pay his soldiers if he was granted an advance from the treasury. As this could not always happen, complications arose in such cases. The European travellers visiting India verv often complain of the salaries being in arrears for as long as fourteen months. When Aurangzeb was serving in the Deccan, even this period of delays in salaries was exceeded. There was open mutiny once in the imperial camp; on another occasion the emperor had to advance money from his private treasury in order to meet a part of the claim. Advance salary was sometime paid when an important expedition was fitted out.

Gentlemen Troopers

Ahdis have usually been described as gentlemen troopers serving the emperors directly. They could not have done so without some organization. We have already mentioned that they had a bakhshi of their own serving under the imperial Bakhshi. There were as many as three bakhshis of the Ahdis sometimes. They were paid by a separate diwan stationed at the capital. Besides the bakhshi and the diwan they seem to have had military leaders as well. Some mansabdars had Ahdis under them. It appears therefore that they were placed under mansabdars specially selected for the purpose. Ahdis were usually men of good birth but without the wherewithal to start as mansabdars in their first appointment to office. But they were paid three times the salary allowed to other soldiers and could thus soon blossom forth as mansabdars. They were soldier on the way to become mansabdars. Of course they were distributed for service over the provinces. We hear of a bakhshi of Ahdis in Kabul in Auranyzeb's reign.

Artillery

The artillery under Akbar consisted of 150 pieces selected for the emperor's special use, besides the weapons used by the rank and file. All these were manufactured here in the imperial factories. Akbar tried to secure from the Portuguese some of their better pieces but without success. Later on European gunners were employed in the artillery. Manucci became the most famous of them by his *Storia de Mongor*. The heavy artillery pieces sometimes required 20 yokes of oxen to draw them along the road with the occasional help of elephants on steep or rugged patches. The balls used weighed from 20 to 120 lbs. The light artillery consisted of small field pieces mounted on small carriages drawn by horses. A spare horse accompanied every piece. There were also about 500 light pieces mounted on camels. The artillery used gun-powder manufactured locally.

The use of linked artillery in the front in open battle, as practised by Babur does not seem to have been repeated often. The artillery was however frequently used in open warfare and placed in front of other arms. The artillery was an imperial arm. The entire park was under a superintendent at the capital working under the Mir Bakhshi. Whenever it was likely to be used, pieces were allottd to the expeditions.

Infantry

The infantry formed a miscellaneous crowd. It included musketeers and swordsmen among the combatant services, and spies, guards, wrestlers, porters, sappers and miners, carpenters, water carriers and camp followers of various kinds among the non-combatants. The musketeers numbered 12,000 under Akbar, but under his successors their strength was greatly increased. They were usually recruited from among the inhabitants of Kanauj, Lucknow and their neighbourhood and came sometime to be called on that account Kanojias. They seem very often to have formed a part of the contingents of favoured mansabdars, though they were maintained as a separate royal arm as well. The musketeers of Jahangir were described as good shots by Terry, but Bernier in his days found tnem ineffective and afraid of being singed by smoke. Their importance can be judged from the fact that when Aurangzeb raised 6,000 of them from Lucknow, they were paid three months' salary in advance. The musketeers were paid Rs. 15 a month under Aurangzeb when ordinary foot soldiers were being paid Rs. 8 only.

Elephants

Elephants formed a very important branch of the army. Towards the end of Akbar's reign, there were 6,751 elephant in the royal stables. European writers put the number under Jahangir between 3,000 and 4,000 though only 1,400 of them are said to have been in the royal stables. They were used for carrying the heavier pieces of artillery on land and helped the royal forces in crossing over the rivers and streams. On the battlefield, they were used to force the gates of the besieged forts. They carried the drums of the high mansabdars as they marched to an expedition. The commander-in-chief of the army was expected to be seen riding an elephant so as to be visible to the rank and file. Dara's changing his elephant for his horse at Samugarh has been alleged to have caused his defeat. They were intended to be used as striking weapons and mounts for ordinary soldiers in the open. For this purpose they marched fully armed and well protected. The head was covered with an iron or hide piece. A sword and two daggers protruded from the trunk and the two tusks. On the back four soldiers rose in four wooden turrets shooting arrows or discharging muskets. The driver wore metal plates for protection. When they were driven into the opposite army in bulk, they used their trunk as an offensive weapon, catching hold of all those who came in their way, tossing them high into the air and trampling them under their feet. In the uncleared jungles and marshes of Bengal, they were used both for clearing the jungles and for crossing over marshy grounds. They carried heavy loads of men and materials on their back.

Artillery and elephants mixed ill together. The elephants were usually kept in the rear of the army and only driven into battle when the artillery had been silenced. There was the danger of their being frightened otherwise.

They were placed under a mansabdar of high rank at the capital. They formed the only regimented portion of the army. The whole pack was divided into groups of one thousand animals, subdivided into groups of one hundred made up of smaller sub-divisions of twenty, split up into two parts of 10 each.

By a rather curious system of taxation and accounting, they were supposed to be attached to the contingents of the mansabdars deductions from whose salaries were made for their maintenance.

Navy

The Mughals did not have much of a navy. It should be remembered that the Spanish Armada had been organized to carry soldiers for making a landing in England. Sea battles in the proper sense of the term had not yet come to be fought even in Europe in the sixteenth century. The Mughals had no large fighting vessels. The ships that they maintained were mainly mercantile ships maintained for carrying out the policy of State trade. Against the Portuguese, the English and the Dutch pirates in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, they were powerless.

But the Mughal *Mir-i-Bahar* maintained a large number of boats for war purposes. In Bihar and Bengal, campaigning by land routes was not always easy. The heavy rains made the roads unsafe for travel. Boats were used for movements of men and materials and for keeping communications open with the rest of the country.

More than twenty different varieties of State boats in use have been described by Abdul Latif when he accompanied his master to Bengal in Jahangir's reign. Talish mentioned seven varieties engaged in the Mughal attack on Chittagong in 1666, totalling 288 boats in all. They have been thus described when in action:

'Ibn Husain [with the imperial nawwara] set out to meet the enemy [that had already started out], though the wind had freshened and the sea was raging in billows to sink the imperial ships. Ten *ghurabas* and 45 *jabbas* of the enemy hove in sight and began to discharge their guns. They boldly steered their ships up to the enemy. The enemy could not resist the attack, the men of their ghurabas jumped overboard, and the *jabbas* took to flight. Ibn Husain seized the *ghurabas* and wanted to pursue [the enemy]. The Bengal sailors, who had never even seen in their minds the vision of a victory over the Magh fleet, objected. He decided to stay. Suddenly two or three ships with flags were seen afar off. The Maghs had left their large ships [behind]. Ibn Husain encouraged his crew. They agreed. The enemy issued forth from their creek and stood at sea in the line of battle. Ibn Husain arriving there began firing his guns [from his smaller ships] and sent a man to hurry up the *salbs* [larger ships]. These arrived at the time of the evening prayer. From that time to dawn there was cannonade between the two sides.

Next morning the Mughal fleet advanced towards the enemy. first the *salbs,* them the *ghurabas,* and last the *jabbas* and *kosas* side by side. The enemy lost all courage and began to row back their ships, fighting during their flight."

Military Expeditions

The emperor maintained a stable at the capital. Here were kept horses, elephants, camels, oxen, and mules.

Animals meant for the emperor's use were kept apart as Khasa. The Atbegi supervised the entire establishment under the Khan-i-Saman. Under him were daroghas in charge of various stables. A mushraf kept accounts and was assisted by several clerks and minor officials.

When an expedition was to be organized, officers for service on it were first selected. They were informed through the Mir Bakhshi either to repair to the capital or to join the expedition at a place named in the order. They were asked to come fully equipped. A commander of the force, a bahshi and a newswriter, a mir manzal, and sometimes a diwan of the expedition were then named. The commander was very often invited to explain his plan of camfaign to the king in the Ghusl Khana in the presence of the Diwan and the Mir Bakhshi. All the rommanders present at the capital or in the imperial camp had audience of the king in the darbar when they were given leave to proceed to their task. The commander saw the Diwan before leaving and got any instructions the latter cared to to give. If necessary, advances were given to the various mansabdars for equipment and distribution to their soldiers. Necessary pieces of artillery and the elephants needed for service were either allotted from the imperial park and the stables or orders were given to the provincial authorities to supply these from the stock at their disposal. For provisions, orders were usually sent to the provincial officials in the neighbourhood of the scene of action. Sometimes some of the mansabdars were granted jagirs in the vicinity of the scene of action. Local officers were instructed to keep the roads open and prevent any help coming to the enemy or the rebels from other directions.

The absence of state arrangements for supply and transport became conspicuous when the expeditions were organized. For their baggage and camp equipment the mansabdars, helped by the local authorities, made their own transport arrangements as best as they could. The provisions for mansabdars and men were provided by the banjaras who followed the army. For lengthy operations and in distant expeditions the supply of provisions from outside presented a very difficult problem. The Deccan operations of Aurangzeb illustrated this weakness of the Mughal military operations very well. The Marathas made procuring of local supplies impossible. The banjaras had to supply the Mughal armies from elsewhere. When the provisions came, the Marathas fell upon the caravans bringing them and compelled the imperialists either to tell off large contingents for guarding the incoming supplies or to die of starvation.

Usually the expeditions started at a lucky moment selected by the court astrologers. This practice continued even under Aurangzeb who replaced Hindu astrologers by Muslims. The army marched looking for auspicious signs all the way.

On the march, a section was told off for advance guard duties. Every night when the army encamped, night watch was provided by various mansabdars in turn. Spies and scouts obtained intelligence of the enemy's whereabouts and movements. In the imperial territories representatives of the revenue department assessed the damage to standing crops inflicted by the soldiers on the march.

In the enemy country, fear of the worse usually led to the adoption of a scorched earth policy by the enemy. The Rajputs of Mewar almost always adopted this policy in order to make imperial advance difficult.

The army usually marched by easy stages. Akbar would sometimes cover long distances in a very short pediod. His expedition to Gujarat covered 1250 miles in twenty two days. Sometimes reinforcements sent had to hurry up at an incredible speed. But the usual speed on march was about 12 to 15 miles a day.

The place where battle would be joined would very often depend on the defenders. It was customary at the time not to offer the enemy any opposition on his immediate entry into one's territory. but to lure him on to a suitable place of battle where he could be opposed with some chances of success. That is why many battles were fought on famous battle-fields. Both sides would make efforts to reach such a place first in order to gird themselves up in safety before the other could challenge a battle. Babur reached Panipat. waited in harness all the night for the enemy whom he was expecting, and threw up defences round about him during the days that followed.

When the armies faced each other it was customary to divide them in several wings. Besides an advance force there was the van, the centre, the right and the left wings and a reserve at the back. The main strength of the army was posted in the centre.

During sieges several types of contraptions were used. Packets were thrown. stones slung, the walls were mined under the protection of moving structures which were also used for placing guns in a position from where the artillery could produce better effect on the defences. The besiegers had very often to guard against premature exploding of the mines. Sometimes an effort was made to starve out the garrison. Very frequently attempts were made to discover some undefended way into the fort.

The defeat of an enemy usually led to uncontrolled plunder. Muhammad Arif tells us that when Akbar conquered Chitor, in the plundering that followed every soldier had more than his fill of it. Prisoners of war were made slaves and probably converted. Akbar issued an order discontinuing the practice of making them slaves, but we do not know much about the alternative he adopted.

Diplomacy was always tried by the Mughals before they resorted to the force of arms. The Mughal resources in men and materials would very often easily overawe a haltering enemy. Akbar and Shah Jahan were always willing to tempt the chief props of the enemy into their service. Shah Jahan offered Shahji the rank of a 6000er. Mir Jumla was appointed the Diwan of the empire for his desertion of his master. Before taking action against Shivaji, Jai Singh entered into agreements with all his enemies not only promising them their revenge in Shivaji's consequent humiliation, but winning them over by fair promises into imperial service. Akbar's mansabs made it possible even for ruling princes to be lured into his service. The extent of the empire and its vast resources enabled him to satisfy the ambition of most of the ruling princes whose own resources were very often petty.

Occasions for commencing hostilities could always be easily manufactured. But the main motive always was imperial ambition and desire for becoming the acknowledged master of the entire country. Akbar and his successors were very often helped by the fact that very few princes with whom they were dealing had long been independent. Most of the Muslim principalities were the result of successful rebellion against the kingdom of Delhi. Of the Hindu rulers, most Rajput chiefs had acknowledged the Ranas of Mewar as their superior chiefs. Quarrels among neighbouring princes very often led one of them to seek Mughal allianc against his more powerful but more grasping neighbour. Monarchy cannot always guarantee good government or even secure a line of undisputed successors. In some states. as in Gujarat and Bengal under Akbar, an occasion for and a justification of, Mughal invasion could be easily found in the lack of any universally acknowledged ruler of the whole country. Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb made difference in sectarian beliefs a cloak for their imperial ambitions when they attacked Golkanda and Bijapur. Sometimes the death of a ruler and consequent differences among his possible successors, as in Jodhpur in 1679, gave the emperor an excuse for attacking the country. It was only a Shivaji or a Yusafzai chief in the north-west, or the Maghs in the north-east who would provoke Mughal attack by their own aggressions into Mughal territory. The weak hold of the pre-Mughal Muslim rulers on the people made it always possible, as it did in Kashmir, for Akbar and his successors. to count an enemy's weakness as an excuse for attacking him.

Commanders

Akbar used to appoint joint commanders of forces at first. Soon he gave it up and his successors did not revive the practice. Aurangzeb's suspicious nature led to a systematic adoption of the joint command in Mughal operations. Akbar had tried to secure before their appointment that the two commanders when appointed did not disagree. But Aurangzeb, as in the Deccan and Rajputana, joined two hostile public servants in an ill-matched temporary military wedlock, expecting the one to spy on the other. This naturally accentuated their normal hostility and rivalry.

The Mughal princes formed a major military problem. The emperors tried to use them in military commands—under a commander's tutelage in Akbar's reign, independently and sometimes nominally under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and under the hostile and suspicious eyes of the emperor under Aurangzeb. Akbar had treated them as normal public servants. Jahangir heaped honours and mansabs on Shah Jahan which the public treasury could ill stand and which were out of all proportion to the services a public servant could ever hope to perform. In his own turn Shah Jahan surpassed even his father's ill-placed generosity towards himself in his treatment of his sons. Their high mansabs were not simply a means of making generous provision for their maintenance; appropriate commands had to be found for them. An eye-witness's account of the siege of Qandahar that we possess demonstrates fully the evils that followed princely appointments to high command. The councils of war degenerated into a mock ceremonial in which the cynics and the flatterers outdid each other in rendering any useful consideration of the military problems impossible. The place of stalwart commanders in council was usurped by magicians and wonder-workers who promised to obtain heavenly help in the enterprise rather than allow the legitimate use of earthly resources. If any seasoned commander was foolish enough to hint at possible difficulties, he was allowed to be sneered at with impunity. And every princely command did some commoner out of his legitimate job. Their field for promotion became limited, leading to natural discontent among the higher ranks.

Multiple commands were first invented for the benefit of princes under Shah Jahan, but they soon spread elsewhere. Instead of the field for promotion being left open to talent, the favoured few usurped all the plums of service by being appointed to all the good jobs. They could not be everywhere. So in some of their commands, they left their own nominees—usually some one who could not have had that office independently. Thus some higher public servant who would otherwise have got the job as an independent command felt cheated out of his legitimate chances of promotion. The deputy of the favoured mansabdar in his own turn did not enjoy much initiative and had to look for orders to his superior.

Aurangzeb made another contribution to the military difficulties of the empire. He loved to direct military operations himself, not only, as Akbar did, on the spot but even from a distance. This put an end to the initiative and sense of responsibility in the military commanders on the spot. The Rajputana expedition illustrates this fully, probably because we possess a large number of letters that passed between Aurangzeb and his commanders. Aurangzeb suggests a forward march into the enemy country in Mewar, the commander pleads lack of means. When this is made up, he refers to the change in the military situation making it impossible 'even for a bird to flutter his wings' without the permission of the Rajputs.

Weakness of the Mughal Army

As it was, even the original organization of the Mughal army was defective. In the field or on the march, it was a loose organization—cumbersome, slow moving, hard of hearing—into which only an Akbar or a Todar Mal might put some life. When Akbar appeared in Gujarat after 22 days' rapid journey, not only were the rebels taken by surprise, even the Mughal commanders would not at first credit the story. Such feats were exceptional and as long as they did take place, the empire was safe. But the vast bulk of the Mughal camp with its followers always made it a slow thing and an easy target for attack. The imperial harem sometimes accompanied the emperor; in the Deccan we find Aurangzeb now permitting, now forbidding, the families of the soldiers from residing in the Mughal camps. But confusion was worse confounded by the fact that neither the Mughal commanders nor the rank and file had any maximum limit of ease or comfort on the field laid down for them. As they wore no uniforms, there could be no orders against wearing mufti while on active service. The result was that neither in dress nor in equipment did the great mansabdars ever try to effect any simplicity on the battlefield. It became a point of honour with some of them to appear as well groomed and as well fed on active service as in the streets of the capital. Their luxurious standard of life became a scandal and made the Mughal army an exposed objective to a vigilant and more hardy enemy such as the Marathas proved themselves to be. This was made all the more possible because there were no state arrangements for transport in the Mughal army. A soldier or an officer carried with him all the baggage he could afford to take with him. This militated against the enforcement of any standard of life in the army as legitimate or permissive.

We have already seen that the lack of any state organization for supply to the army on active service gave an active enemy a chance of embarrassing and harassing the Mughal troops by falling on their supplies. This again became very apparent during the Maratha campaigns.

The Mughal soldiers were only indirectly recruited by the emperor. The mansabdars raised them and paid them though out of the money specially granted to them by the state. But thev knew no higher loyalty than to their own commander. When their commanders rebelled the rank and file usually followed them in their rebellion. There was almost a total lack of regimentation. This led, as we have seen, to a very low proportion of officers to men on active service. The five thousand soldiers under a Mughal amir knew only one commander. Thus when the single commander was killed in action, even if the soldiers were ready to die in his cause and on his side, no one could come forward legitimately to lead them to action.

The morale of the soldiers was therefore lower than it would have been in a well-officered army, such as that of the Marathas. Panic could only be prevented by the appearance, actual or rumoured, of the emperor on the battlefield, as of Akbar at Haldighat. All other means proved usually abortive.

Total Strength

The strength of the Mughal army has been variously estimated. The emperor did not have a very large army attending on him personally at the capital. The Ahadis, the elephants, the artillery, and a very large proportion of the musketeers were stationed at the capital and had their movements controlled from there. The rest of the army was distributed all over the empire and stationed for garrison or general duty. Of course it was under its own mansabdar commandrs. It would have been impossible for any Mughal emperor to denude any part of the empire of all its troops and send them for duty elsewhere. The slow means of communication and unsatisfactory condition of roads made a satisfactory distribution of troops all over the empire essential. We can form a better estimate of what troops the Mughal emperors could put into the field against an enemy from the numbers that were actually employed in certain campaigns. At the battle of Dharmat some 60,000 royalists were ranged against a force of some 1,00,000 rebels under Murad and Aurangzeb. At the battle of Samugarh, Dara had some 60,000 troops under him. About 25,000 soldiers had been despatched against Shujah to Bengal. Shah Jahan had thus been able to put into the field three separate armies totalling in all about 1,45,000 soldiers. Adding 10,000 rebels. this gives us the maximum strength which a Mughal emperor could put into the field at any time. The potential total strength of the entire country as put down in the *Aim* gives us only an academic figure of no military interest. The attempt to compile a total from the number of mansabdars breaks down because the actual swar mansab is not always indicated. Many of the mansabdars were serving in nonmilitary capacities. Smith held Mughal resources contemptible against the arms of contemporary European States. The charge may have been unjust; but when the Mughal armies faced differently organized Maratha forces, better officered, better disciplined, lighter, more mobile and better knit together, they were never able to make much impression upon them. But most other Indian armies were worse organized than the Mughal armies. Hence the Mughal success.

Akbar's manifold reforms contributed undoubtedly to make the army a formidable force in its time and place in India. The mansabdari system made it possible for the emperors to be sure of getting a large army for their manifold purposes. The system of *dagh* and *chahra* contributed towards making its quality better. The annual reviews before payment secured the observance of Akbar's reforms. Frequent transfers from one place to another, from civil to military employment and vice versa, partially secured that the military commanders would not be able to take root anywhere against imperial interests. Akbar's mechanical bent of mind and his interest in animals brought about an improvement in Mughal equipment. Its quality can be easily inferred by its manifold successes on the field.

CHAPTER X

RELIGIOUS POLICY

Under Babur and Humayun

When Babur occupied the throne of Delhi, he made few changes in the administration of the country. Humayun had hardly any time to apply to administrative problems. Both left the practices of the Sultanate intact in, among other things, their religious policy. The main plank of this policy was the imposition of the jizya and the pilgrimage tax. The frequent changes of dynasties at Delhi created a small ruling class changing in its composition with the change in the dynasty. It usually consisted of the kinsmen or fellow tribesmen of the occupants of the throne. It did not include all Muslims. it could not be expected to include Hindus. Sikandar Lodhi had interfered actively with the public performance of Hindu ceremonies even in places of Hindu pilgrimage, but that seems to have been forgotten under the Mughals. Both Babur and Humayun were easy-going rulers. They were even sometime suspected of being Shias. Besides continuing the existing practices, they do not seem to have done much to promote Islam or persecute the Hindus.

Akbar's Creation of a Secular State

With Akbar's accession to power a new policy came to be founded by the Mughals. Its main planks remained standing for about a century, between 1563 and 1679. To Akbar must be given the credit of finding out a way of ruling successfully in a country where the majority of the population was not Muslim and had no intention of becoming so. His Muslim predecessors on the throne of Delhi had closed their eyes to this fact except to the extent of inventing the pilgrimage tax as a concession to Hindus at a substantial cost. They had paid dearly for it. Dynasty had followed dynasty in quick succession, so that between

1206 and 1556 Aibakites, Altamashites, Balbanites, Khiljis, Tughlaks, Sayyids, Lodhis, Mughals, Surs and Mughals again had in succession filled the throne of Delhi. Akbar represented the tenth dynasty to rule over Delhi in 350 years giving an average of less than 40 years to each. Akbar was deeply religious. Earlier, in Firoz and Sikandar, this had implied a more vigorous persecution of Hindus. Akbar's religious instinct, however, made him rise above scholastic theology. Claiming openly throughout his reign to be a staunch Muslim who had taken Islam and its institutions to regions where they had not been heard of before, he decided to live in amity with those whom the persecution of his predecessors had neither reconciled to Islam nor to the Muslim rule at Delhi. Surrounded by intolerant rulers in Asia and Europe at that time, he decided to seek a path of his own in India never transgressing in the attempt the Quranic law as he understood it.

His solution was to found a comprehensive, all-inclnsive State in India where there was no distinction in law and administration between the Hindus and the Muslims. His main achievement in one sense was negative. He removed the impediments that had been placed in the path of the Hindus in the hope that they would be frightened by them and as a result accept Islam. This hope had been belied by the events of the last three centurises. Akbar, therefore, thought himself justified in accepting the fact and acting accordingly. He could find precedents for his attitude in the early history of Islam when the Prophet was dealing with the Jews and the Christians of Mecca.

Abolition of the Pilgrimage Tax

He began by abolishing in 1563 the tax the Hindus paid when they visited their holy places. He lay encamped near Mathura at the time. There were Hindus soldiers in his army and when Akbar discovered that they could not visit their holy shrines except by paying Rs. 6¼ per head—amounting to about half a month's salary—he abolished the tax forthwith. It was not collected in Jahangir's time. Shah Jahan revived it for a short period but gave it up when Hindu scholars led by Kavindracharya—the most famous teacher of Banaras at the time—requested him to withdraw his order. The pilgrimage tax had been abolished earlier by Firoz Shah Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodhi. They had held it illegal. Akbar may thus be held to have followed their footsteps. But the similarity in the two outlooks was only apparent and not real. They had abolished it to prohibit Hindu visits to their holy places. Akbar intended nothing of the kind. He agreed with those who had permitted these pilgrimages and fairs in holding that the Hindus ought not to be prevented from performing these acts enjoined by their religion, but refused to make them an occasion for filling his treasury.

Abolition of the Jizya

The next discrimination to attract his attention was the jizya. Early in the history of Islam, when the Prophet was organizing his state at Medina, he asked the Muslims to make payments to the public treasury as a religious duty. This could not hold good for the non-Muslims. What they paid was called jizya. It was a single tax compounding for all their financial obligations towards the state. Thus the taxes paid by the Muslims and the non-Muslims came to be known by two different names. We know too little of these times authentically to be able to say whether the non-Muslims paid at a higher rate than the Muslims. But the available evidence seems to indicate that there was no such difference. In the century following the death of the founder of Islam. the Muslims were busy conquering and converting the surrounding area *en masse*. But Jews and Christians persisted in remaining parts of the new state that emerged. Their services were needed by their Muslim masters in many cases. Later ages ascribed the institution of the jizya to Ummar II who tried to solve satisfactorily the question of the position of the non-Muslims in the Muslim State. The payement of the jizya guaranteed to the non-Muslims—Jews and Christians mostly—the exercise of their religion in the privacy of their homes.

But it now became an additional tax. As such it was introduced in Sindh when Muhammad-bin-Qasim established his authority there. The Brahmans were exempted from its payment. Firoz Shah Tughlaj levied it on the Brahmans as well. Babur and Humayun continued the imposition they found in force.

Originally a single tax on non-Muslims. the jizya had become outside India a contractual payment made by the non-Muslim minorities to their Muslim rulers in consideration for permission to practise their religion neither too openly nor too offensively. What jizya looked like to Akbar's contemporaries is best described in the words of a famous Sufi, Mulla Ahmad. "The main objert of levying the jizya," he declared in a letter to a disciple, "is their humiliation and disgrace....and (establishment of) the prestige and dignity of the Muslims." Akbar was wise enough to discover that no State could live by insisting on the perpetual humiliation and disgrace of the preponderant majority of its subjects. The history of the early Muslim dynasties in India had demonstrated it so well. As an additional tax on the non-Muslims it could neither be traced in the *Quran* nor in the authentic traditions of the first four Khalifas. If Ummar II had instituted it, as the tradition had it, Akbar could abolish it—as Zainul Abdin had done before him in Kashmir—without either touching the fundamental concepts of Islam or lowering its prestige. He abolished it in 1564.

This was a turning point in the history of the Muslim rule in India; nay more, it was a turning point in the history of Islam. Muslim rulers in India with the exception of Zainul Abdin in Kashmir—who anticipated Akbar in many other ways also—had never devoted much attention to the question of organizing government in countries where the non-Muslims formed a majority of the population. They had been content to rule there as others had ruled over territories where the non-Muslims formed small minorities, very often holding aloof from the majority of the population even when it had accepted Islam. But preponderant majorities treated in this fashion could only be held down by sheer force which could not be guaranteed to reside aways in either the Muslim ruler or the small minority of the Muslims. Stable rule of a Muslim dynasty in such a country had come to be incompatible with the existing notions of Muslim polity. By abolishing the jizya Akbar removed the galling distinction between his Mnslim and non-Muslim subjects and declared that a Muslim king could be the Padshah of the Hindus and the Muslims alike. He removed the perpetual antagonism that had so far existed between the Muslim rulers and their non-Muslim subjects and thus provided them with a reason for being loyal to their Muslim rulers. He rooted his rule in the affection of his people and demonstrated that a government so based was not incompatible with Islam.

It has been sometimes suggested that the jizya was the non-Muslim equivalent of the duty which every Muslim owed to the State to serve in its defence. It was never so in India. Had that been the fact it should not have been levied on the Hindu rulers in allianse with Muslim sovereigns who always hastening to their aid with their armies. It was a blatant badge of inferiority hung round the neck of their Hindu subjects by their Muslim rulers. Akbar removed it and openly declared that he would not divide his subjects into two classes, supposed to be perpetually at war with each other. He comprehended all classes of his subjects within his citizenship.

But political reasons apart—though it has been asserted that the jizya had emerged as a political experienced—the jizya had been of no service to Islam in India. If it had bolstered up the Muslim ruling class, it had never convinced the Hindus in India that because they paid the jizya, their religion was therefore in any way inferior to that of Islam. Deeply religious as Akbar was, he saw no reason why he should be a party to the perpetual humiliation of his subjects because they were professing their own variety of religion.

Thus Akbar created a common citizenship for all in India. His example was followed by Jahangir, Shah

Jahan, and for twenty-one years by Aurangzeb. Till 1679 the Mughal rule in India differed from the rule of other Muslim dynasties. Akbar had provided it with a *raison de etre*.

Non-Muslim Places of Worship

Akbar was not a man to leave any good work half done. The equality of status once established between his Hidu and Muslim subjects in theory, he followed the principle through. Non-Muslims needed new places of public worship as much as the Muslims. He now allowed the Hindus to build new temples. The Christains were also permitted to erect churches at Agra, Lahore, Bombay and Thatta. Jahangir followed Akbar and allowed the Jesuits to open more churches in Hooghly and Ahmedabad. But war led to a reversal of this policy. Under Jahangir and Shah Jahan when they made war on the Portuguese, their churches were closed but they were allowed to hold religious worship in the privacy of their homes. The temple at Kangra suffered desecration twice in 1572 and in 1621. When Mewar was invaded under Jahangir, several temples were destroyed during the course of military operations. During the suppression of rebellion in Hargaon (near Allahabad) and Urchha many temples were destroyed and many more converted into mosques in Shah Jahan's reign.

In the first half of his reign Shah Jahan reversed Akbar's policy and insisted that no new temples be built. In pursuance of this policy several temples were demolished in Gujarat, Banaras, Allahabad and Kashmir. But during the latter half of his reign we hear no more of this vandalism. Some of the evidence available indicates that he gave it up.

Apostacy

Though the Muslims were free to make converts to their faith, a Musalman seeking admission to another religion was condemned to death. Akbar discovered that sometimes force had been used in converting Hindus to

Islam: he gave permission to such new converts to go back to their religion without incurring any penalty. Christians were similarly allowed in 1603 to convert such Muslims as had at one time been Christians. Shias were also left free to propagate their views. It is necessary to remember that not many conversions followed as a result of this permission. Its value mostly lay in stopping the use of force in conversions.

Public Services

All religions were thus put on a footing of equality by Akbar. But religious equality does not always carry with it the right to a share in all the advantages which a state may offer. Only the threat of a civil war between England and Ireland led to the opening of public services to Roman Catholics in Breat Britain in the nineteenth century. Akbar therefore followed the establishment of religious equality under him by throwing open all public appointments to Hindus. Muslims and Christians alike. In 1594 twelve finance ministers were appointed in the twelve provinces of the empire; 8 of them were Hindus, Bhagwan Dass, Man Singh, Rai Singh, and Todar Mal served as successful governors of provinces. Todar Mal became Akbar's Finance Minister and the highest public servant. When the *Ain* was compiled. 14 Hindus had been appointed to hold the rank of 1000er or above against 137 such appointments in all, and 51 Hindus held the rank of 200er or above in a total of 415 such appointments. Even though the number of the Hindus in the public services was not large, no office lay beyond their reach. The use of Persian as the language of record and accounts led to the Hindus reading Persian. This made possible their promotion from the ranks to the higher grades.

Jahangir continued this policy. Man Sangh, Raja Kalyan and Raja Vikramajit served as governors of Bengal, Orissa and Gujarat respectively. Mohan Dass served as his Diwan. Hawkins mentions six Hindus occuying the rank of 3000er or above in a total enrolement of 47. Hindus seem to have suffered a setback in his reign on account of some of them helping Khusru in his rebellion. Man Singh's hand had been suspected herein. Rai Singh of Bikaner actually declared for Khusru. No wonder then that we find Hawkins telling us that Jahangir preferred employing Muslims.

Under Shah Jahan the position of the Hindus remained unshaken in the empire even though Khafi Khan states that Shah Jahan issued an order prohibiting employment of the Hindus in the public services. At the end of the tenth year there were 76 Hindus ocupying the status of 500er or above out of 419 in all. At the end of the twentieth year the number of the Hindus mansabdars stood at 97 while the total strength had increased only to 453. In the higher ranks, above 1000er, the number of Hindus was 35 out of 189 at the end of the tenth year and 52 out of 241 towards the end of his reign. When Aurangzeb rebelled against Shah Jahan in 1658, Maharaja Jaswant Singh was the premier public servant of the empire, being a 6000er. Rai Raghunath was the imperial Finance Minister and Raja Jai Singh was the closest confident of the emperor.

Cementing Hindus and Muslims

Akbar tried to bring all his subjects together in two ways. He got religious books of the Hindus translated into Persian in order to promote greater understanding between the learned in the two communities. This good work continued under his successors so that many Sanskrit works became available in Persian. The *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Harivamsha*, the *Upanishads*, the *Yoga-vasishtha* were thus translated. Hindus had been participating in the Muslim court festivals. Akbar now added *Lassarah, Dipavali, Rakshabandham.* and *Shivaratri* to those the Mughal court was already celebrating. Of these *Dassarah* rontinued a court festival till about 1678. Troops were reviewed and robes of honour distributed among the Hindu mansavdars. Jahangir continued *Rakshabandhan* for sometime as a means of distributing alms among the Brahmans.

In 1586 Akbar introduced a new reckoning of time of his own, the Ilahi year, as the official standard of reckoning. It did not supplant the Hirji year in common use. Even official documents bore both the dates. The Ilahi year continued in use by Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Humayun had introduced *Kurnish* and *Taslim* as methods of saluting the emperor on entry into the court. It was the adoption of the Hindu *Dandavat* to an imperial use. Rulers are apt to consider themselves higher than ordinary mortals and thus extort greater honours. *Kurnish* was likened to *Sijida,* bowing down to God in humiliation and objected to. Akbar then made it voluntary. But the fashion caught on: here was a cheap method of pleasing the emperor, few could withstand the temptation to adopt it. Despite the disclaimers of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, it continued in use throughout their reigns under different names. Now and then an orthodox scholar would refuse to employ it without—let it be admitted in fairness to these rulers—any detriment to himself. Akbar annexed *Tuladan* —weighing of oneself against various commodities and giving these away in charity—as a court ceremony on his birthday. Jahangir and Shah Jahan found nothing objectionable in the practice. Even Aurangzeb recommended it to his son as a method of warding off evil, though he discontinued it as a court ceremony.

Other Reforms of Akbar

Though tolerant otherwise, Akbar would not leave evil alone even if it had religious sanction at its back. He refused to countenance the practice of sending unwilling Hindu widows to death on the funeral pyre of their husbands though he respected the scruples of those who were willing to meet death in this fashion. The custom seems to have been common only among the Brahmans and the Rajputs. Even there only those widows were expected to become Satis who had no children of their own to look after. Akbar prevented unwilling Satis. This policy recommended itself to his successors as well. Under Jahangir it became necessary to secure a permit for practising this rite. Akbar tried to prevent child marriages even though both the Hindu and the Muslim orthodoxy backed this evil custom. He permitted Hindu widows to remarry. He declared himself against marriages between near relatives. He tried to stop the circumcision of children though with what success we do not know.

Many Muslim rulers before him had left the evil of drink alone. Akbar decided that it was not possible to prohibit it altogether and that it would be better to control its use. Wine was allowed to be sold ostensibly for medical purposes, but every purchaser had to give his name. Being drunk in public became an offence, disorderly conduct in public was punished. To control the evil of prostitution, all women of ill fame were assigned separate quarters, names of those visiting them or sending for them were taken down. He allowed women to come out of their seclusion to the Mina Bazar. In education and literature he was not content with the study or spread of the Muslim theology alone. He patronized astronomy, mathematics, history, *belles letters,* medicine and many other subjects. His patronage of painting, including portrait painting, led to the foundation of a new school of art in India. Jahangir and Shah Jahan evinced equal interest in both these fields.

The chief ecclesiastical authority in the Mughal State was the Sadr. He seems to have exercised an almost unlimited power of making grants, with the result that Akbar's first Sadr Abdun Nabi made larger grants than those of all the previous rulers taken together. Akbar held investigations, resumed all the hereditary grants, re-awarded them to teachers, muftis and scholars according to his own estimate of their worth. They were to continue during their lifetime only. When he discovered a scholar wielding an unhealthy influence on the inhabitants of the place where he held a grant, Akbar transferred the grant. He ordered that if a grantee entered public service or was absent from his grant, it be taken over by the State. In 1604 all the grants made in Gujarat were found to be too lavish and he halved them. A Parsi priest, however, succeeded in keeping his grant intact.

The "Infallibility Decree"

While reorganizing his administrative machinery, Akbar appointed Sadrs in the provinces as well. This decreased the powers of the imperial Sadr. In 1579 Akbar had a petition presented to him signed by his Sadr and other great scholars and jurists. It declared that if Akbar did anything for the good of the state which was not contrary to the *Quran*, it should be considered lawful. Those opposing it were threatened with dire consequences in this world and the next. Miscalled the 'Infallibility Decree' by Smith, its nature has been very much misunderstood. It did not make Akbar the Pope and the Emperor in one. He assumed thereby no right to issue orders which could not be challenged. Anybody could challenge them if they were contrary to the *Quran* which alone formed the foundation of Muslim polity. Of course he could sweep aside the 'Muslim law' as them understood but few Muslim rulers in India had ever cared for it in the domain of public law. Akbar showed his solicitude for Islam by thus binding himself to the *Quran* even in the public law of the state. Ala-ud-Din had felt surprised and indignant when Mughis-ud-Din told him that his government was contrary to 'the law'! Akbar did not want to incur that odium. He stood by the *Quran* and gave his subjects the right to call him to account if he went against its injunctions. In the domain of personal law Akbar assumed the right to render the 'final' judgement in any case in which the jurists differed and he undertook to be bound by one of the prevailing opinions. He was no more infallible here than the House of Lords is today when it decides a case in appeal.

He only superseded the Sadr in his supervisory functions. It should be remembered that few cases were brought up on appeal on a question of the interpretation of the law in Mughal India. No case could ever be brought before a court without the consent of the complainant. If he was satisfied by a decision given by a qazi, the defendant had no right to take it any further. The only practical effect of the declaration was to allow Akbar to declare that he was an orthodox Muslim.

It has been suggested that this petition was secured by force from its signatories most of whom signed it unwillingly. Among the signatories were the chief Sadr, the provincial sadr of the Punjab, the Chief Qazi, the Grand Mufti, and Ghazi Khan. Not one of them by their subsequent conduct indicated that they had unwillingly signed away orthodoxy in this document. Not one of them left the service of the state, then or later, on this account.

The Din-i-Ilahi

Smith made a 'grand discovery' that Akbar founded a religion in 1582, announced it publicly and sent missionaries to propagate it openly in all parts of the country! He was led thereto by the *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* and the *Munthkhib-ut-Tawarikh.* The *Dabistan* had included the *Din-i-Ilahi* of Akbar as one of the *Mazhabs,* whereas Badayuni talks of Akbar's renouncing Islam about this time. Coupling the two together Smith came to the conclusion that Akbar renounced Islam and founded the *Din-i-Ilahi.* Smith had illustrious preducessors about Akbar's spiritual claims. Some had called the Din-i-Ilahi a comparative religion combining the best that Akbar had found in the contemporary beliefs. The two contemporary evidences can be disposed of easily. A *Mazhab* of the *Dabistan i-Mazahib* was anything from an order to a distinct religion. By including the *Din-i-Ilahi* in the *Mazahibs* he studied, the author did not exalt it into a distinct religion. Badayuni has a long list of Akbar's sins of omission and commission which would not have been necessary at all had Akbar founded a new religion. Badayuni could then have simply stated that Akbar left Islam and founded a different religion. That he considers something more than this statement necessary proves that to Badayuni Akbar did not cease to be a Muslim because he had founded what the *Dabistan-i Mazahib* in the seventeenth Century called the *Din-i-lahi.*

That the *Din-i-Ilahi* was not a distinct religion is amply proved by the Jesuit authorities on whom Smith relied in a contrary sense. Monserrate in 1583 and

Pinheiro and Peruschi in 1595 had never heard of a new religion publicly proclaimed by Akbar in 1582 though both of them were deeply interested in the question. Bartoli on whom Smith relied wrote a century later. Smith admits that one of Bartoli's authorities was Monserrate and where the original authorities are available, Bartoli is of no account. Monserrate does not credit Akbar with the founding of a new religion. There are vague statements made about *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* in contemporary records. That Akbar had disciples—*chelas*—makes him no better nor worse than so many shaikhs and scholars about whom Badayuni himself tells us so much. That Abul Fazl ascribes miracles to him brings him in line with such a pillar of orthodoxy as Sikandar Lodhi whose fame as a great Muslim ruler grew as the story of his miracles spread. Some of those who entered the order declared their readiness to serve Akbar at the cost of their person, property. honour and religion. There was nothing strange in this declaration. Hafiz had long ago exhorted disciples to abjure all religious scruples in their abedience to their spiritual leader. Such a declaration did not mean that Mirza Jami who made it ceased to be a Muslim. The rules of the order as they have been handed down to us concern such trivialities as keeping a portion of the grave open to allow sunlight to fall on the dead face, holding the *chahlam*—the feast ordinarily held by a man's relatives on the fortieth day after his death—during one's lifetime. Akbar was looked upon by his disciples—and their number was never very large—as their Pir and not as the founder of a new religion. But the *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* was not primarily a religious order. It seems to have been more like the contemporary English Association wherein Elizabeth's ardent supporters had banded themselves in order to save her from fanatic Roman Catholics. The *Din-i-Ilahi* seems to have been a similar order the members of which undertook to serve Akbar against all sorts of attacks by fanatics. In the institutes of the order as they have come down to us there is nothing like combining the best in various religions nor is there anything in it on the strength of which one could exalt it into an international religion which some have fancied it to be.

Akbar a Muslim

Akbar needed supporters against the fanatics' fancy. They saw in Akbar's reign a danger to their hegemony. Badayuni has drawn up a long list of Akbar's innovations. It makes very amusing reading today. The Jesuits interested in proving that Akbar was about to become a Christian have added many traveller's tales to Badayuni's account. We are thus told that Akbar allowed shaving off the beard and wearing of silk dresses and did so himself. He kept dogs. He is alleged to have discontinued Muslim fasts and festivals and forbidden them. Yet Badayuni in his account of the contemporary saints and scholars speaks of their celebrating both the festivals and the fasts in various parts of the country without hindrance. The account of the Jesuits' travels again gives us a picture where Ramazan was well observed and Muslim festivals celebrated with gusto. Akbar is accused of discontinuing prayers in the darbar. No Mughal emperor, including Aurangzeb, ever said prayers in the open darbar. Akbar is wrongly accused of stopping pilgrimages to Mecca in 1582. The Jesuits found many men and women going to Mecca in 1595. Smith accused Akbar of neglecting mosques and allowing them to fall into ruins on Jesuit authority which however spoke of it in connexion with cities themselves in ruins. Akbar is said to have used some mosques for secular purposes. Most mosques contain buildings and open spaces meant for secular purposes. A mosque is not a consecrated thing in its entirety like a Christian church. We cannot take the Jesuits seriously when they tell us that not a single mosque was being used for its lawful purpose at Lahore in 1590 and 1595. One authority that makes this statement couples it with the absurd declaration that on his way to becoming a Christain, Akbar had distributed all his wives but one among his courtiers! The second tried to impress his Christain superious by adding that there was not a single copy of the *Quran* to be had at Lahore in 1595 when it had a qazi, a mufti, and a muhtsib of great repute functioning officially. In their haste to tell stories of the persecution of Islam— not of the Muslims—Badayuni and his kind spread fantastic stories: Akbar hated the name of the prophet and changed all names where it occurred! Yet curiously enough Akbar's own name in his farmans and on his coins remained Jalal-ud--Din Muhammad Akbar. He is said to have prohibited the study of Arabic. This is disproved by the fact that he kept Arabic books in his library and got some of the Arabic classics translated into Persian.

Smith found in Akbar's orders forbidding the public sale of meat on certain days persecution of Islam. Jahangir continued the practice, saw nothing anti-Islamic in it, but called it Sufiana—the way of Sufis. Few would agree with Smith against Jahangir. Not a single case is found of any one having been executed for killing animals on prohibited days or for killing kine as Badayuni would have us believe. On the other hand we have a case of a high Mughal official killing cows at Thanesar, sacred to all Hindus, and being only kept away from that place for some time.

The charge popularized by Smith—though originally brought forward by Beveridge—that Akbar persecuted Islam then falls to the ground. Islam was not a dead religion in Akbar's reign but strongly established according to Du Jarric even in 1603. Akbar could not have hated the very name of the Prophet when he built a splendid edifice to guard the impress of the Prophet's foot brought back from Mecca at Ahmedabad and appointed theologians to keep guard over the sacred relic. Any one insulting the Prophet was sure of having a dagger plunged in his breast in 1598.

Badayuni and the Jesuit fathers found fault with Akbar's religious beliefs. The former has a long list of his shortcomings. Some of them would make a modern Muslim smile. He did not believe in angels and invisible beings. He is said to have rejected the law [the Muslim jurisprudence], miracles, the authority of the [early] prophets and [of a hypothetical] Imam. Listening to the early history of Islam, 'he began to think less of the companions of the Prophet' which every Shia does. He is said to have refused to credit certain incidents in the life of the Prophet. He did not believe in the ascent of the Prophet to heaven for receiving revelation personally from God. Above all he is accused of possessing a spirit of inquiry opposed to every principle and asserting 'reason to be the basis of all religion'. Most Muslims today will dismiss most if not all of these faults with a smile as beside the point, though to some contemporary orthodox Muslims they seemed to be so decisive against Akbar.

In his letter to the philosophers of Europe in 1582 Akbar declared himself a Muslim. In 1586 writing to Central Asian rulers, he proudly declared that he had spread Islam and brought honour to the name of the Prophet in places which had never before heard of him. Faizi composed a special section in praise of the Prophet as a part of his *Nal-o-Daman* presented to Akbar in 1595. Roe coming soon after Akbar's death declared that he remained a Muslim all his life and died as one. His tomb was worshipped by Muslims as that of a saint early in Jahangir's reign.

Much has sometime been made of one of Akbar's 'Happy Sayings', recorded in the *Ain-i-Akbari* that he was not a Muslim and could not therefore compel others to accept Islam. The first part only meant that Akbar considered himself falling short of all that Islam demanded from its followers. Such an assertion could be made only by one who not only accepted Islam as his religion but had a very high opinion of its demands on its followers. Badayuni credits him with adopting Hindu ways 'to subdue the sun to his wishes'. He does not accuse him of worshipping the sun. Among these ways was keeping a perpetual fire burning and rising when lights were brought to court every evening. The first adopted a Parsi custom without its religious accompaniment, the second annexed a Rajput tradition without any intention of departing from monotheism.

To sum up then, Akbar remained a Muslim all his life and died one. He did not persecute Islam though some of its professors felt they were being persecuted when Akbar took away from them the right to persecute others for their opinions. He emancipated the state from its thraldom to Muslim theologians in order to create a common citizenship in India. England did not enjoy religious toleration and freedom from civic disabilities to the extent to which Akbar guaranteed it to his subjects till the second quarter of the nineteenth century. When Europe was plunged into a strife of warring sects, Akbar guaranteed peace to different religions. He was the first and almost the greatest experimenter in the field of religious toleration in the modern age.

Under Jahangir

We have already seen Jahangir following in the footsteps of his illustrious father in the matter of abolition of the jizya and the pilgrimage tax and opening highest public services to the non-Muslims. The cultural contact between Hindus and Muslims sought to be established by Akbar through participation in Hindu festivals and Persain translations of Hindu books continued. He patronized Surdas, the great Hindi writer. Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan wrote verses in Hindi which continue to delight readers even today. Jahangir's association with Yadurup Gosain continued Akbar's traditions of bringing together the learned of all religions. Akbar's administrative reforms also continued intact. In certain directions, however, Jahangir showed some backsliding. Whereas Akbar had left alone conversions to different faiths, Jahangir gave stipends to Muslim converts, tried to stop the conversion of Muslim women to Hinduism in Mirpur and Rajauri in Jammu where this seems to have been happening on a large scale, and on hearing of the possible infection of certain Muslim young men by 'Hindu virus', he had them punished. He showed great keenness in suppressing heresy as well and punished several theologians for their unorthodox views. In the case of Mulla Ahmad Sarhandi he soon discovered his mistake and released him with all honour. Jahangir demolished the Hindu temple of *Varaha* (Boar God) at Pushkar. The Jains offended him because Man Singh Suri, leader of a sect among them, had advised Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner to support Khusru against Jahangir. He expelled all the Jains from the imperial territories in 1617. The Jain tradition records Jahangir's withdrawing orders of expulsion against the Jains sometime during his reign. It is not clear, however, whether these orders were withdrawn after 1617 or earlier. The Sikhs incurred his displeasure because Guru Arjun, the fifth Sikh Guru, had blessed Khusru's banner After the suppression of the rebellion he was called to Lahore and awarded capital punishment as a traitor. The Hindus of Lahore secured the commutation of the sentence to a fine of Rs. 1,00,000 but when they tried to collect it from his Sikh followers, the Guru refused to countenance this admission of his guilt. He was therefore executed. Jahangir would not however remit the fine even after his death. His son was put in prison in 1616 for the fine due from his father. He was released towards the end of Jahangir's reign after spending 12 years in prison. Jahangir does not seem to have otherwise persecuted the Sikhs. But they held Guru Arjun a martyr for his religion. His execution at the hands of the Mughals led to the transformation of Sikhism into a military order.

Jahangir suppressed public sale of wine and other intoxicants—with what success we do not know—and prohibited gambling. He also prohibited sale of meat on certain days held sacred by him. We find him postponing the sacrificial slaughter of animals to the day following the *Id* when the *Id* fell on one of the days when animals could not be openly killed.

Jahangir, like Akbar, has been accused of being a non-Muslim. Some contemporary Christian writers hail him as a Christian, others call him a Hindu, while one makes him the founder of a new faith of his own. Rafiud-Din writing in the far off Deccan declared him to be a follower of the *Din-i-Ilahi*. An impartial study of all the evidence now available leaves us in no doubt that Jahangir was a Muslim, very often acting as 'protector of the true faith.' His personal shortcomings apart, there is no trustworthy evidence to bear out the fantastic suggestion that Jahangir either left Islam or intended ever to leave it. In the matter of his religious policy he followed Akbar, though exhibiting greater interest in the fortunes of Islam in his dominions than his father had done.

CHAPTER XI

RELIGIOUS POLICY

Under Shah Jahan

We have already seen Shah Jahan follow his grandfather's path so far as the general plan of his policy was concerned. The one short-lived change was the re-introduction of the pilgrimage tax. Religious toleration and absence of civic disabilities on religious grounds remained parts of his administrative policy in general. We noticed above his prohibition of new Hindu temples and their demolition everywhere in his reign. We have also referred to the change he made in the field of conversions of Muslims to other faiths. All these departures seem to have disappeared after about the twelfth year of his reign.

But with Shah Jahan a change had begun. He loved to parade himself as the champion of the true faith, the Sunni variety of Islam. His annalists mention the large amounts that he spent on Muslim festivals. He took greater interest in new converts to Islam and appointed a Superintendent of Converts. Religious offences could be easily washed off by accepting Islam. The Hindus who had been marrying Muslim girls and converting them to Hinduism in the Punjab and Jammu were told that their sentences of imprisonment would be remitted if they embraced Islam. The Portuguese prisoners of war were offered similar terms. He ordered that if a Hindu was converted to Islam, he should get his share of the ancestral property at once even though the Hindu law did not permit it. Of course converts from Islam remained liable to execution though many seem to have escaped this fate in the latter part of his reign. Forcible conversions were made in the Hindu territory beyond the Indus by Shah Jahan's governor Shuja. Akbar had discontinued making prisoners of war first slaves and then Muslims. Shah Jahan used war systematically for making converts to Islam by force. We find this happening in Kabul, Urchha, Ujjain (near Allahabad), Balgiana and Karnatak. During a severe famine in the Punjab, Hindu and Muslim children were bought by the state. While the Muslim children were restored to their parents, the Hindu children seem to have been used to swell the ranks of the faithful. Hindu princesses marrying Mughal princes were now formally admitted to Islam before their marriage.

Similarly blasphemy was now more strictly punished. It is necessary to record that all Shiahs were held heretics by the orthodox. This explains Shah Jahan's demand on Qutb Shah of Golkonda that he should accept the Sunni faith and declare it the orthodox religion in his territory before peace could be made with him.

Shah Jahan's reign has been called a prelude to what followed under Aurangzeb. Howsoever true this may be of certain Muslim aspects of Shah Jahan's government, it ceased to be true in general in the latter part of Shah Jahan's reign. His persecutions were never systematic and did not last long. Akbar's comprehensive state still lingered on though it showed a scar or a wound here and there on its fair face.

Aurangzeb's Early Reign

Aurangzeb defeated his father's forces in May 1659, made him a prisoner in June and ascended the throne formally in June 1659, after removing a Sadr-us-Sadur who would not acknowledge his right to rule, based as it was on his imprisoning his father. He thus secured himself on the throne by following Akbar's theory that in public law a Muslim ruler was not bound to follow the law as declared by his highest theologian. It has sometimes been asserted that Aurangzeb contested the throne as an orthodox champion of Islam against the pro-Hindu Dara. The contemporaries did not look upon that contest as lying between Dara and Aurangzeb but between Aurangzeb and Shah Jahan. Aurangzeb counted among his supporters the Rana of Udaipur, and the Raja of Sarohi. Jaswant

Singh of Jodhpur and Jai Singh of Jaipur fought on Shah Jahan's side against his rebel sons, but when Shah Jahan's forces had been defeated they went over to Aurangzeb's side. In a contemporary account in verse of Aurangzeb's reign, it is suggested that Jaswant Singh deserted Aurangzeb at the battle of Khajwaha because he believed that Aurangzeb was anti-Hindu. This suggestion however is not borne out by other contemporary accounts. When he came to the throne, Aurangzeb gave no sings of being adversely inclined towards any class of his subjects. His trial of Murad and Dara and the imprisonment of one and the execution of the other were judicial farces enacted as a balm to his own conscience rather than as an assertion of the supremacy of Muslim orthodoxy.

In understanding Aurangzeb's relations with the Hindus it is necessary to remember certain dates and keep in mind certain public officials. When he came to the throne, Raja Jaswant Singh was the premier public servant of the empire, Jai Singh occupying the second place to him. Raja Raghunath was the imperial Diwan. Raghunath died early in 1663, Jai Singh passed away in 1667 and Jaswant Singh in December 1678. As long as the three were alive Aurangzeb seems to have continued the comprehensive state of Akbar. Raghunath's death was followed in 1665 by the first outbreak of his feelings against the Hindus. Jaisingh's removal from the scene in 1667 was followed in 1669 by a general campaign for the destruction of temples. Jaswant Singh's death in Aurangzeb's service in 1678 left the way open for finally destroying the comprehensive state which Akbar had built.

Emperor's Surrender to Theologians

But Aurangzeb's relations with Hindus alone do not distinguish his reign from that of his predecessors. We cannot understand either him or his reign properly if we concentrate our attention on this aspect of his reign alone. Beginning mostly from his eleventh year, **Aurangzeb** became his theologians' delight but his subjects'—Muslims and Hindus alike—exasperation. He assumed the duty of imposing on his subjects what his theologians told him was the Muslim way of life. He surrendered his right to independent judgement in matters which they said were their concern. Unfortunately the theologians' conception of the Muslim way of life was mostly based not on the Quran but 'the Law', Muslim jurisprudence that had grown up outside India. It seemed to assume that there was no decent place for the non-Muslims and Shias in a State governed by a Sunni ruler. It persecuted Shias, Bohras, Khojas and Hindus alike. Badaynni describes the fall from grace of a Muslim public servant indifferently as his acceptance of Shia creed or of Hinduism. The *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri* which Aurangzeb's theologians took several years in compiling well mirrors their mind and describes the humble position the heretics and infidels were to occupy in a Sunni state. This was some thing new in the house of Babur who on the eve of a battle had once promised to be a Shia if he won the contest and had prayed to Ali to save Humayun in his critical illness. Humayun in India had been suspected of being a Shia and had bought Persian aid with the promise that he would spread that faith in India. Akbar's heritage had been saved for him by his Shia regent Bairam Khan. Shah Jahan had certainly made the Shia faith of the rulers of Golkonda a reason for making demands upon them. But he had left Shias in his own kingdom alone. Not so Aurangzeb.

The Change

He started early and by easy stages. In 1659 immediately after his ceremonial coronation he entrusted to Muhtsibs, who had so far acted as the inspectors of weights and measures mostly, the duty of enforcing the Muslim way of life on the Muslims. At the same time he discontinued the stamping of *Kalima*, the Muslim creed, on the coins even though the practice had been sanctified by long usage in India and abroad. The Muslim world and official apologists ascribe it to Aurangzeb's anxiety to prevent the coins and therefore the *Kalima* from being handled without proper respect by the non-Muslim. He adopted the Muslim lunar year, the Hijri, in official reckoning of his regnal years. This did not entirely supersede the Ilahi year in royal orders and other official documents Aurangzeb's solar birthday continued being celebrated during at least the first decade of his reign. We find even the Vikram era used in official documents as late as 1671.

Whether the Muhtsibs succeeded in enforcing the Muslim way of life is doubtful. Aurangzeb's subsequent legislation implies that the Muhtsibs did not succeed very much in putting down the current unorthodox practices on their own. Aurangzeb did nothing either to enforce their authority or to put pressure otherwise on his subjects during the first decade of his reign except issue an order in 1659 forbidding the cultivation of poppy and asking the revenue officials to persuade the cultivators to take to other crops. Processions of prostitutes were forbidden in 1665 as also the manufacture of figures of men and animals in clay.

In his eleventh year in 1668 Aurangzeb entered the second phase of his reign. A thorough purge was carried through of the court ceremonies and such as were found to be 'unlawful' or 'forbidden' were discontinued. The first casualty was music. Royal musicians were told that Aurangzeb had no time for music and therefore they need not perform before him. Soon however they were told that as they plied a useless and a forbidden profession, they were not welcome at court. Some time thereafter Aurangzeb prohibited public music at the religious ceremonies of Muslims. Music of certain kind is permitted in the Muslim law. Aurangzeb held that neither he nor his Muslim subjects mere entitled to enjoy the temptation. This brought him into clash with those Muslim theologians who held that the use of music was not only permitted in Muslim religious ceremonies but positively commanded. None dared to take the remonstrance of such theologians to the royal ears. But when a battle royal was threatened in Ahmedabad between the followers of an influential Sheikh and the censor, Aurangzeb was informed. The Sheikh concerned in the threatened trouble turned out to be one whom Aurangzeb had once honoured as his own guide. Orders were sent allowing the Sheikh to go on his own way unmolested. The prohibition with regard to music does not seem to have been very much enforced. It seems to have provided occasions for clashes between rival opinions and therefore rival religious leaders.

Tuladan was also discontinued about this time. But the prohibition does not seem to have lasted very long, particularly because Aurangzeb seems to have been always in two minds about the institution. Tavernier and Ovington both refer to it as a prevailing institution in the seventies and eighties of the seventeenth century.

The practice of sitting for the *Jharoka Darshan* was discovered to be an invitation to human adoration and was therefore discontinued in 1668. Two sculptured elephants adorning a gate of the fort at Agra were removed as offending Muslim taste. Castration of children as also the use of garments of silver and gold thread was forbidden in 1669.

Astrologers and astronomers attached to the accounts department were ordered to be dismissed in 1669. But we find Hindu astrologers still employed in 1671. Muslim astrologers employed by the state find mention in the official records of 1681.

Muslim courtiers were ordered in 1670 not to raise their hands in salute when they met one another but to wish peace only by word of mouth.

A Puritan's Crusade

After this comes another period of rest of about a decade. The third period of his reign begins in the twenty-first year (1679) when a still more thorough purification of the court practices was accomplished. Gold and silver wares were removed from the court and the coutiers' use of them in any form was forbidden.

Marking the *tika* sign on the forehead of the Hindu rajas on their accession was discontinued in the same year.

Aurangzeb tried to govern the fashions of the day. The cut of the beard, the length of the trousers, the shape of the socks all received royal attention. Regulation were made on these subjects and enforced.

Aurangzeb's puritanical campaign included regulations against intoxicants and prostitutes. In both cases Aurangzeb aimed at the impossible; complete prohibition in the first and banishment or marriage in the second. Drinking was too strongly entrenched among the ruling classes to be easily eradicated. He had to make an exception in favour of the Europeans in the artillery. This made the procurement of drinks easy for those with means—they could easily buy them from the European manufacturers. Prostitution, 'the oldest profession in the world', failed to yield to Aurangzeb's treatment and despite his orders Ovington found plenty of prostitutes in Surat.

The lighting of lamps on the night preceding Friday on the tombs of saints was ordered to be discontinued. Like Ibn Saud in our days he would not allow the erection of buildings to house the corpses of the dead nor permit the weekly celebrations there.

How the faithful stood the strain of such a control of their lives we can easily guess. None of these regulations could be successfully enforced. It created a class of inflated beings who, because they followed these orders, soon gave themselves airs. It also enabled the Muhtsib's officials to poke their noses everywhere. It is doubtful whether they actually succeeded in making his subjects better Muslims. The evil of drink was as rampant as ever before. Prostitutes and dancing girls abounded in the entourage of the upper classes. Music did not disappear either from their religious ceremonies or private convivialities. Of course it made the Mughal court a bald institution—though it was not so bald, if we are to rely upon the accounts of European travellers, as these regulations would have us believe. It is further necessary to remember that two years after adopting the last set of these regulations Aurangzeb left for the south never to return north during the remaining twenty-seven years of his life. Whether in his absence in the south these regulations continued being enforced vigorously in the north seems doubtful. Most of the cases that arise about the infringement of these regulations come from the south.

But these regulations made it easy for rivals to pull one another down. It had only to be suggested that some one was infringing one of these regulations to bring the emperor's wrath on his head. Aurangzeb came to hold the view that poets were the devil's agents. He prohibited the study of the most widely read Persian poet of his day—Hafiz. He needed court poets to write *qasidas* but when one of these compositions pleased him, he wished the author had done something else to earn his favour. One courtier wanted to do an ill turn to another. He suggested that his rival was a poet Investigations were at once started. The poor fellow denied all pretensions to such a useless calling. His signet ring was then requisitioned and it was discovered that instead of his name, it contained one word only which his rival said was his pen name!

The ascendancy of the theologians took another form as well. Several of the taxes which were declared to be unlawful were abolished. Akbar had discontinued collecting several of them. Many of these continued however to be levied by the subordinate officials, mostly because they formed a part of the grants towards their salaries and partly because some of these were hallowed by age. Aurangzeb does not seem to have taken any effective steps in putting them down. The duties of the censors did not extend to the prevention of their collection by powerful officials.

Heresy Hunt

But orthodoxy could not long survive on chewing its own cud. It had to find victims outside its own ranks. A heresy hunt was organized early in Aurangzeb's reign.

It seems to have been partly inspired by political motives. The victims of these persecutions were mostly the theologians with whom Shah Jahan and Dara had been on intimate terms. Mulla Shah Badakhshani, whom Shah Jahan used to call one of the two emperors of India and who had never acknowledged any other man as his superior, was summoned from Kashmir where he then was. He would not leave Srinagar at first but when he did so at last, he stayed at Lahore at his *pir* Mianmir's tomb and sent a chronogram on the emperor's accession. Aurangzeb was pleased at this sign of Mulla Shah's interest in his fortunes and let him remain at Lahore where he died in peace in 1672. Sheikh Muhib Allah Allahabadi died before Aurangzeb could call him to account. But the most famous of his victims was Sarmad, an Armenian convert to Islam. He went about naked, was enamoured of a Hindu boy and would recite only the first foot of the Muslim confession of faith. The Chief Qazi had him at last convicted of heresy for his refusal to recite the Kalima in its entirety. He was executed as a heretic but buried near the Friday Mosque in Delhi where his tomb is still venerated as that of a saint.

If other victims failed, Shias formed convenient tools for the exercise of Aurangzeb's religious zeal. Sayyid Niamat Allah was sent for from Bengal but before he could be persuaded to go to the court, Aurangzeb had changed his mind. Husain Malik and Mahammad Tahir were beheaded for blasphemy. But the deadliest blow on the Shias was the order issued in 1669 prohibiting the celebration of Muharram. Many Shias in the public services were degraded or otherwise punished for daring to disobey the imperial orders. The Shias among the Bohras were forced to accept Sunni theologians but many of them kept their Shia beliefs secret though outwardly conforming to Aurangzeb's order. The Khojas in Gujarat were of Shia persuasion. Aurangzeb summoned their leader Sayyid Shahji to court. He took poison on the way though his followers suspected the hand of the governor in it. They marched on to Ahmedabad and took the fort of Broach when they were opposed. They defied the local fojdar; the provincial governor failed to dislodge them from the fort at first but succeeded ultimately. 'The imperialists paid dearly for their success.' Whether any further steps were taken against them after this we do not know.

The invasion of Golkonda and Bijapur was also a campaign against their Shia rulers. Shah Jahan had called upon the ruler of Golkonda to renounce his faith and proclaim the Sunni beliefs as the state religion. The king conformed, of course outwardly. Despite the remonstrances of Shaikh-ul-Islam, Aurangzeb made war upon Bijapur and Golkonda and conquered the one in 1689, the other in 1694. Their conquest was followed by the suppression of the Shias in those territories and the proclamation of the Sunni faith as the state religion.

Persecution of Hindus

Orthodoxy cannot long live satisfied with heresy hunt either. A more befitting subject to pour its scorn and contempt on has always to be discovered among the infidels. Aurangzeb's reign was no exception. But as with the enforcement of his religious regulations on his fellow Muslims, his measures against the Hindus developed by stages. The first declaration of his policy comes in the Banaras Sanad dated February 28, 1659, when he declared that he had no intention of touching the ancient temples of the Hindus but would not allow new temples to be built. In November 1665 we find him ordering the destruction of those temples in Gujarat which he had destroyed earlier when he was the governor of Gujarat but which had been repaired later on. They included, among others, the famous temple of Somnath. About the same time we find him prohibiting the carrying out of repairs to old temples—so that they should disappear for want of repairs—and ordering the destruction of all the temples built during the last ten or twelve years. In April 1669 Aurangzeb issued an order to his governors to destroy all the temples old and new, big and small, situated in their charges. Thus began a campaign of temple destruction in peace-time unknown in the history of India so far. Doubts have been thrown on the authenticity of this order. But its receipt in Gujarat and Bengal is recorded by independent contemporary evidence. Action on it is known to have been taken in the provinces of Delhi, Ajmer, Agra, Oudh and Malwa about this time. Famous Hindu shrines at Hardwar, Ayodhya, Mathura, Brindaban and Banaras were destroyed in the years immediately following. Some of them were converted into mosques which still stand as a testimony to Aurangzeb's iconoclastic zeal.

It has been suggested that Aurangzeb's general order of 1669 was provoked by the Brahman practice of teaching their holy books in the temples to Hindus and Muslims alike. If that were so, Aurangzeb should have either stopped the Muslim students from attending the temple-schools or punished the Brahman teachers of Sindh, Multan and Banaras who were reported to be instrumental in weaning away Muslims from their faith. To order the destruction of the temples all over India for the 'fault' of these teachers is not highly creditable in Aurangzeb—as some apologist for him would have us believe today—but unreasonable and unjust.

The Jizya and Destruction of Temples

There is a short lull of some years in the records. But when Aurangzeb reimposes the jizya in 1679, the campaign for the destruction of temples begins again. Several temples in the state of Jodhpur, then under the administration of an imperial fojdar, were destroyed in March 1679 and the broken pieces of the images exhibited for the edification of the believers in Delhi. When he went south, a special officer accompanied him charged with the duty of destroying all the temples *en route*. In some areas where there were no Muslims, the temples were closed rather than destroyed. The conquest and occupation of Golkonda was followed by the destruction of its temples in 1687. In Bijapur the campaign for their destruction was delayed probably till 1698. Elsewhere a reign of terror seems to have been established. Hindu commanders accompanying the Mughal expeditions were not allowed to carry on worship according to their own rites. Hindus could worship their gods only in secret and always in fear of being punished if their enormity was discovered. Sometimes they bribed the local officials heavily so that they connived at their using the temples which the officers were content with formally desecrating once.

The evidence of the *Akhabarat* of Aurangzeb's reign—which form the minutes of Aurangzeb's government in the Diwan-i-Am-o-Khas—leaves us in no doubt that Aurangzeb would have liked to close down, if not destroy, all the Hindu temples. Thousands of them of course escaped his misplaced religious zeal. But hundreds of temples—including some of the most famous in India—that were destroyed cry out aloud against him. He stands alone in these acts of vandalism in India.

Several other measures were taken to penalize Hindus. As we have seen above, higher rates of taxation were laid down for them in certain cases. The pilgrimage tax began to be charged again and in 1679 the jizya was reimposed. Here again Aurangzeb charged it as it had never been charged before. Not only did all the Hindus in the imperial territories pay the tax, it was levied in the feudatory states as well. Hindus in the Mughal armies as well as in the public services paid it in all humility. It had always to be paid personally; no one was allowed to pay it through an agent. Aurangzeb's officers were making Mulla Ahmad's assertion true that its object was to heap indignity and shame on the heads of the Hindus.

Such an unpopular tax levied so harshly and re-imposed after having been in abeyance for more than a century could not have been easily collected. In Malwa, Jaipur, Burhanpur and Gujarat there were clashes between the collectors of the jizya and the tax-payers. Armed detachments had to be sent to reinforce the tax collectors.

The poorest people were taxed most heavily. Those with property worth less than Rs. 52 paid Rs. 3⅓ annually. In their case it was equivalent to more than the interest due on their capital. Possessors of property worth between Rs. 52 and Rs. 2,500 paid Rs. 6¼ and those above paid Rs. 12½ annually. The poorest classes paid the amount in four instalments, the middle classes in two instalments, the richest people in one lump sum. Minors, women, slaves, the blind, the insane, and unemployed cripples and beggars were exempted from payment. If a man remained in bed for more than six months continuously, he was also exempted.

Elaborate arrangements were made for the collection of the tax. A demand register was maintained. The tax collector in the parganah was authorized to call upon the local officials for help. Kotwals, qanungos and garrison commanders were enjoined to hasten to the help of the amins of the jizya when called upon to do so. The parganah collections were reported to the provincial collector from time to time so that he might take adequate steps for making good any remissness on the part of the local collectors. If a man escaped payment on account of some mistake in the official records, he was not held liable to payment for the past year. Wilful evasion, however, brought with it the payment for two years together. As was the case with other taxes, the jizya was also sometimes remitted in certain localities for economic or political reasons. In 1704 its collection was stopped in the Deccan. Individual arrears of other taxes were sometimes allowed to stand. It seems this was not permitted in the case of the jizya. It thus took precedence over all other taxes.

Some modern apologists for Aurangzeb have tried to put forward an ingenious defence for this step on Aurangzeb's part. Payment of the jizya, it has been asserted, guaranteed a limited amount of toleration to those who paid it. That exactly was the complaint of the Hindus. They were being charged a special tax for the exercise of elementary rights of citizenship. To say that Islam required it was untrue, if the Muslim law of a later date made this distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims, the Hindus could not be expected to like it and consider it a blessing. Muslim contemporary opinion saw in the tax an instrument for humiliating the Hindus. No state can exist on the basis of treating the preponderant majority of its citizens in this fashion. That pre-Akbar Muslim rulers had levied it furnished no special ground for imposing the tax. But the fact that Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb himself for the first twenty-two years did not collect this tax furnished a special reason why it should not have been levied. Aurangzeb levied it when politically he found the opportune moment. Raja Raghunath, Jai Singh and Jaswant Singh were all dead. Even so, several senior public servants, all Muslims, opposed the levy. Soon after its imposition there was an earthquake. Terrified at this manifestation of what they considered divine wrath, some of the courtiers again urged Aurangzeb to retrace his steps. It was thus levied against the advice of his own public servants who clearly foresaw the evil consequences that would follow its imposition.

Indignities Heaped on the Hindus

But the jizya was not the only cross which the Hindus had to bear under him. Other indignities were heaped indiscriminately upon their heads. The celebration of Holi and the Dipavali was forbidden in 1665. Hindus were forbidden to burn their dead on the banks of the Jamuna at Delhi and those of Sabarmati at Ahmedabad. The sacred hot springs at Mustafabad were closed. Manufacture and use of fire-works were prohibited. Hindus were forbidden to carry arms in public in 1694. The Rajputs and Marathas excepted, no other class of the Hindus was allowed to ride good horses, elephants or in palanquins. Several cases of breaches of these orders and the punishments that followed have been recorded. In 1672 all grants made to the Hindus were withdrawn.

So the theologians had everything their own way.

No wonder that they became overbearing. The old official classes resented their rising power and when opportunity offered mocked at it. When the news of Shaista Khan's discomfiture at the hands of Shivaji reached the court, some one suggested in the open court that a theologian be deputed against Shivaji! At Lahore open war broke out between the qazi and the governor. The one lost his life, the other lost his office.

Naturally the position that the Hindus had occupied in the public services could not long continue. Aurangzeb issued orders forbidding the employment of the Hindus as fojdars and subahdars. Orders were given to dismiss all Hindus from the revenue department and from the position of personal assistants to the departmental heads. One of his letters preserves a general order forbidding the future employment of Hindus presumably in all departments of public services. It became impossible to enforce these orders because then, as now, the Muslims preferred the army (and the police) to civil employment. Aurangzeb found it difficult to enforce these orders and was forced to modify them.

Hindu tradition has it that Aurangzeb made a systematic attempt to convert Hindus to Islam. Convicts found the doors of their prison-houses opened if they accepted Islam. Claimants to a property or an estate found that acceptance of Islam outweighed all other proofs of title. Applicants for service discovered admission to public services open to them if they accepted Islam. Economic pressure was put upon them in the form of extra taxes from which escape was easy through conversion.

Results of Aurangzeb's Policy

It is not surprising that besides the sullen discontent among all classes of his Hindu subjects, the more adventurous among them could not contain themselves and risings took place in every part of the country. The Jats rose in rebellion around Agra, the Satnamis gave serious trouble in the Doab, the Sikhs became a problem in the

Punjab and the Marathas consumed all his energies for twenty-seven long years in the south. As Khafi Khan puts it, Aurangzeb found it impossible to keep peace in any part of the country. Being himself in the south where even the Mughal soldiers were clamouring for their arrears of pay in a mutinous spirit, he left the north almost alone. But the change in the religious policy which he carried out left the Mughal empire without its motive power, with the reason for its existence gone, and placed it on the same level as the pre-Akbar Muslim dynasties of Delhi. He brought about this change with his eyes open but the very fact that it came in stages and was not complete till some twentytwo years after his accession amply proves that he was no religious fanatic carrying out the orders of his theologians meekly. He waited for his opportunities for introducing changes. It may be true that he may have liked to transform his entire government to what he considered a Muslim model all at once but circumstances bound him hard and he proceeded slowly. Even then his judgement of the opportune moments for introducing momentous changes in his religious policy was proved wrong by subsequent events of his reign and those of his successors. Guardedly and slowly though he moved, the movement proved fatal to himself and his house. He let loose forces which ultimately brought about the downfall and disintegration of his empire within less than two decades of his death. The Jats, the Rajputs and the Marathas took their inspiration from him. He made their success possible by allowing them to represent the Mughal empire as no better than what it was under him.

To say that he was inspired by religious motives does not excuse him. Some of the worst crimes in the history of the world have been committed in the name of (a sectional and partisan) God. To define his methods of government as truly Islamic is to insult Islam. They may have conformed to the Islam of the schoolmen; they could not be excused by the authentic traditions of toleration in the earliest history of Islam.

But Aurangzeb was no worse than the contemporary rulers elsewhere in the world—if anything he was a little better. Never under his authority was private worship by the Hindus in the privacy of their home forbidden as it was in the Cavalier England. The burden of the jizya on the Hindus was no higher than the tithes which the Roman Catholics in Ireland paid for the support of the Protestant Church till 1867.

Aurangzeb's main fault lay in going back on the path Akbar had shown. Europe was still practising persecution, India under Akbar had given it up. Whereas European rulers were only continuing their old traditions, Aurangzeb was breaking with the recent past.

CHAPTER XII

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

The administration of justice under the Mughal emperors presents a rather complicated picture. So many functionaries seem to be deciding cases and delivering judgement that it becomes a little difficult at times to understand clearly the working of the system. Various courts had different sanctions behind them which sometimes produced friction. In order to understand the Mughal judicial system it is best to start with the courts and their jurisdictions.

Four Types of Courts

There were several types of courts dealing with various kinds of cases. Two types are easily discernible. There were the revenue courts determining cases arising out of complaints abouts rights in land. There were the qazis' courts hearing civil and criminal cases. Besides these, two more types are also heard of from time to time. The caste and the village panchayats must have been functioning but outside the normal judicial institutions. The administrative head of the parganah, the sarkar, the subah, and the empire itself—the shiqdar, the fojdar, the subahdar and the emperor—dealt with certain undefined types of cases that came before them. Now these four sets of courts could not be distinguished from one another by exclusive jurisdiction either over special classes of citizens or by entertaining only certain classes of cases. They were in no way mutually exclusive. There were no separate courts for Hindus and Muslims as such. Civil and criminal cases were heard and determined by the same court— in fact all these four types of courts heard both civil and criminal cases. There were no territorial divisions between them either. In a big city, one might find all the four classes of courts functioning side by side.

Territorially the courts formed a concentric organization. At the imperial capital, the Emperor, the Diwan, and the Chief Qazi held their courts. To them could come citizens from all over the empire. Similarly at the provincial capital, the subahdar, the provincial diwan, and the provincial qazi held their courts. Their jurisdiction was limited to their own province, but it embraced the entire province. From anywhere within the province, a litigant could start his case in any one of these courts according to the nature of his cause. In the sarkar the fojdar, the karori and the qazi sat and administered justice at the district headquarters in cases within their administrative jurisdiction. In the parganahs, the shiqdar, the amil, and the kazi, if there was one, dispensed justice similarly. A villager in the remotest part of the empire, therefore, had the right of originating his case anywhere —in the parganah courts, the sarkar courts, the subah courts or in the imperial courts at the capital. The courts held by officers stationed in a bigger unit had thus concurrent original jurisdiction along with the courts in the smaller units.

The various classes of cases, therefore, were not graded according to either the seriousness of the offence or the value of the property involved. The jurisdiction of all courts was unlimited. All of them could entertain civil cases of the highest value and decide criminal cases involving the death penalty. One could not easily call one court higher and another lower in the sense in which we use the term today in connection with modern courts.

This brings us to appellate jurisdiction. In the strictest sense of the term such a thing did not exist. No case was taken from a lower court to a higher court with all the records of the lower court for revision. A criminal case decided by a parganah jazi, for example, might again be instituted before the sarkar qazi if the complainant felt that he had not secured justice. It would, however, be tried there *de novo*. Neither the trial nor the decision would take notice of anything that might have happened in connexion with the case in the lower court. In the sense of one court being subjected to the revisional authority of another, therefore, the courts could not be graded as today.

When we talk of higher and lower courts today, it implies sometimes that the decisions given by higher courts are binding on the lower courts in deciding similar cases before them. Even in this sense one could not grade the Mughal courts. No digest of case law emerging out of the decisions given by the contemporary courts was ever prepared during the Mughal period for the very simple reason that it would have served no purpose. In this sense even, therefore, one could not call one court higher and another lower.

The fundamental concept of judicial administration was that every one taking part therein was supposed to be equally proficient in the matter. True in almost every court, it was truer still in the courts of the qazis. To be a qazi a man must know the law thoroughly well; one could not know it any better. All qazis belonged to the legal fraternity, they were all good lawyers. On the administrative side as well, all administrators were supposed to possess enough commonsense to be able to determine the cases that were brought before them. This supposition need not have been far from truth when one remembers that probably most of the cases arising among Mughal citizens were decided by the Panchayats consisting of laymen who consisted neither of professional lawyers nor permanent officials.

Thus there were four sets of courts in the empire neither graded in their range of jurisdiction nor enjoying mutually exclusive jurisdiction.

Nature of the Law

It has been said by some contemporary European observers that the Mughals had no law. It is one of those half-truths which conceal more than they declare. Administration of justice in a civilized society without any laws is inconceivable. The Mughal period formed no exception. The various courts had their own sets of principles to guide them in their work. The panchayats dealt with justice in accordance with local custom and the Hindu law. The local custom might not have yet been exalted by being enshrined in any digest of law. But the Hindu law existed in the texts of the various law books written long ago. The Mughal period, however, seems to have made a contribution of its own to the development and condification of the Hindu law. Akbar is said to have set up Hindus courts presided over by their own judges. The caste and village panchayats may have received royal recognition. His liberal religious policy and generous patronage of learning led to the compilation of digests by eminent jurists of the time whose exposition of the Hindu law is respected even today. Mitra, Misra, Nilkant, Raghuunandan, and Pratap Rudradeva, among others, produced commentaries on the Hindu law which are authoritative even today.

Then there were the qazis' courts. They administered the Muslim law usually except where it had been modified by imperial edicts. The Muslim law had by now ceased to grow, it could be found enshrined in the *Quran* and the Sharat, but above all in the works of the great jurists of the past commenting on the two. As was usual in other fields of thought, difference of opinion had arisen among Muslim jurists usually divided into four schools of thought, *Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi* and *Hambali*. Of these the *Hanafi* law was usually followed in India. But even among the followers of the *Hanafi* school differences of opinion had long since been emerging. The result was that every qazi was left to his own devices in interpreting the law. He was bound by no commentator's authority, there was no case law emerging in India which could guide his footsteps, he was not bound to follow his own earlier interpretation of the law. Thus though there was the Muslim law, definite and well established as to its essentials, in force in Mughal India, there was so much difference of opinion among those who practised it as to its application in detail, that a foreign observer can be easily excused for declaring that there was no law in Mughal India. That such was the case can be easily proved by a perusal of the *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri,* the digest of Muslim law that Aurangzeb got compiled by a learned board of editors. The justification for its compilation lay, it is openly declared, in the medley of opinion that prevailed then. In the articles on different questions, again, one finds several opinions cited sometimes with equal authority. The *Fatawa* codifies neither the Muslim law nor practices in the way great codes elsewhere did.

The revenue courts applied local custom in their decisions of various cases. Their primary function was to determine on whom the burden of paying the land revenue should rest. They were concerned with titles in land, mostly agricultural land. Here again the custom existed mostly in oral tradition. The qanungo was usually considered to be its best exponent, a walking encyclopaedia of land customs.

Functions of the Courts

The Mughal judges were not only judicial officers, they were policemen as well. When a complainant appeared in a court with a plaint, he stated what he had to say; he demanded justice for some wrong done to him. As we shall see, there was a definite procedure followed in the various courts. But if the regular procedure did not produce a result satisfactory to the complainant, it was the duty of the trying court to start investigations and find out the truth of the matter in dispute. Unlike a modern court, their task was not limited to deciding whether or not the complainant or the plaintiff had proved his case. They were not bound to the records of the case as produced before them. They could make investigations of their own, they could take judicial notice of popular rumours, they could even trick the parties into confessing the truth. Their verdicts therefore always took the form of a declaration who among the two parties to a case had justice on his side. An acquittal on technical grounds then would have been unintelligible. A decision dismissing a suit for want of proof would have brought no honour to the court. Thus every court performed police functions as well, since it investigated the cases submitted to it for judgement.

This would explain what has usually been described as the appellate functions of some courts. If a local qazi was unable to render a satisfactory verdict in a case brought before him, the complainant could go elsewhere not by way of appeal but by way of knocking at a door which might open to him the way to redress. The new court would not call for the records of the case from the court with a narrower jurisdiction for the very simple reason that the verdict given at a court did not entirely rest on the evidence disclosed during the course of the trial. The presiding officer of the new court would bring his own intelligence, commonsense and administrative experience to bear on the question raised in the court. He might—and would usually—start his own investigations into the question and render a verdict based thereon He would not usually record all the tortuous ways of his investigation but would be content with giving his findings only. Thus what appears to us an appeal was a retrial of a case not properly—and neither technically—brought to an end before the court where it had been originally instituted. There was a retrial certainly but without much reference to the way in which the case had been handled by the original court.

One class of courts entertained complaints against administrators, high and low, judicial and executive. The provincial and the imperial Qazis, the governors and the emperor were usually approached by citizens who had been wronged by men in high places. The cases brought before them included abuse of judicial powers as also of administrative authority. There a complainant might allege that he had been denied justice on account of the partiality, corruption, or worse of a court. As the official superiors of the presiding officer in the 'lower court', the provincial or the imperial qazi, the governor, or the emperor would entertain the suit as a new complaint involving however an inquiry into a case already decided.

In such a case the original records—if any—of the court might be called for or an inquiry held on the spot. Neither the governor nor the emperor nor the imperial or the provincial qazis functioned in such cases as administrative courts. The public servants enjoyed no protection from the operation of the ordinary law nor from subjection to the normal courts. Citizens resorted to these courts only because of the belief that they would be able to obtain redress against the wrongs committed by the high and the mighty.

Concieved broadly the various courts tried to afford redress to persons wronged in all possible ways. All sorts of wrong-doers would find themselves called upon to answer for the charges brought against them by any one. No one enjoyed any immunity. The courts would listen to no argument barring their jurisdiction.

Procedure

Centuries of administrative experience in India and elsewhere developed a law of procedure which was followed by qazis' courts in India. We have no detailed information about the working of the panchayats under the Mughals. But the procedure in other courts seems to have followed the one evolved for the courts of the qazis. When a plaint was filed before a court, the opposite party was summoned to the court by a written order (*Dastak*). In the presence of both the parties, issues would be struck. This done, the onus of proof would be distributed between the contending parties. It would then be time to call for evidence from both the sides. When both the sides closed their cases, the presiding officer may stay the proceedings for making his own investigations into the matter. After this he would be in a position to give judgement. Usually a judgement would be accompanied by a *Mahzar-namah,* declaration from the complainant that he was satisfied with the judgement given.

Oaths could be administered but were reluctantly taken by the Hindus. Usually the complainant had to produce his evidence; if he had none, the defendant would not be called upon to disprove what had not been proved. The defendant was in such cases called upon to take the oath denying the plaint of the complainant. It sometimes happened that when the defendant asserted his willingness to take the oath, the complainant might also offer to do the same. But the rule of procedure called for evidence from the plaintiff and oath from the party denying the plaint. Thus if before the oath was taken by the defendent, the plaintiff intervened by his offer to take the oath, the plaint was dismissed.

Muslim jurisprudence allowed the evidence of eye witnesses alone. At least two such witnesses were needed to establish a case. If the complainant could not produce that number his case stood dismissed unless the court was prepared to undertake further investigation.

Certain classes of witnesses were not allowed to give evidence. Such evidence if taken in ignorance of the status of the witness was held unreliable.

Litigants were allowed to prosecute their case in person or by their agents, vakils. These vakils had nothing of either the status or the functions of the modern lawyers. They simply acted as the representatives of the parties. Women seem to have been very often represented by vakils who were supposed to be conversant with the rules of procedure. But they do not seem to have been allowed to discuss the case with the court or interpret either the facts or the law for the benefit of the presiding officer.

Securities were sometimes demanded in civil cases. In criminal cases sureties could be offered by criminals assuring the administrators that there would be no repetition of the crime alleged against them. This could have been possible in cases where requisite evidence against the accused was not forthcoming.

Special Procedure in the King's Court

The king's court was the refuge of all the wronged persons if they could but reach it. Elaborate attempts were sometimes made by high officials such as governors to prevent complaints against them from reaching the emperors. The misdeeds of a governor of Bengal were only reported to Jahangir by some representatives of the news-writer appearing before the emperor as jugglers from Bengal come to entertain him at the time of the royal appearance at the salutation balcony! Here the procedure seems to have been very simple. Those who sought redress of their grievances brought a written plaint with them. A basket was lowered from the royal balcony and the plaints were placed therein. It was then lifted, the emperor went into the various petitions and passed appropriate orders. Passed in the absence of parties and without due investigation, they could have only initiated appropriate proceedings and must have been sent to appropriate officers for inquiry. But these petitions assured that the cases would take their normal course and the result reported to the emperor.

The emperor held court of justice sometimes every day but usually on Wednesdays. All sorts of cases could be brought here before him. Under Aurangzeb, the qazis were sometimes able to oust imperial jurisdiction and insist that cases involving infringement of the Muslims law be tried by them alone.

But normally when a case was brought before the emperor he would either summon both the parties before him, send a messenger with an order to fetch the other party, remand a case to the local court ordering that the decision be reported to him, or send a commission for inquiry on the spot. Mostly these complaints were made against public servants but sometimes other cases were also brought before the emperor. When once a case started in the royal court, the normal procedure was followed except that the emperor could take longer to ponder over the matter and could call upon all and sundry to advise him in deciding a case where a complaint had no evidence to support it. Further the emperor, it seems, could sometimes devise new remedies to redress new wrongs. Sher Shah's alleged decision calling upon a complainant to throw a betel leaf to the wife of one of the princes when she should be bathing naked (her husband had behaved in that foolish fashion towards the wife of the complainant), is recorded by the contemporary historian as an evidence of his ingenuity in letting no crime go unpunished.

The dispensing of justice by the emperor was a ceremonious affair. He had an adequate staff under the superintendent of the court of justice to help him in discharging these functions. It seems to have been the duty of the superintendent to prepare cases for decision by the emperor. The complainants were kept waiting ready to be ushered into the imperial presence when the emperor was free to attend to them. In Aurangzeb's reign, at least ordinarily, the *Diwan-i-Mazalam* had come to be a formal affair. The superintendent presented the complainants in a line and the emperor passed orders. No details of the procedure followed have come down to us. It is probable that the emperors were anxious to earn the religious merit of dispensing justice. Shah Jahan is said to have given orders that the aggrieved persons should be presented to him every day so that he might redress their wrongs. Officials, probably belonging to the office of the *Darogha-i-adalat,* hunted men up and down the streets of the capital but they could find no more than twenty complainants a day who could muster courage enough to approach the emperor for the redress of their wrongs. It must have been an amusing sight—public servants running about to catch hold of men with complaints!

Officials attached to the various Courts

There were several public servants attached to the various courts. Those of the higher dignitaries had a superintendent, a personal assistant, a reader, and a recorder, besides minor officials. Certain courts had the benefit of the advice of the muftis—jurists who advised the court, and probably lay administrators as well, like the fojdars, the subahdars, even the emperor—on legal issues arising out of a complaint before them. Mir-i-adls are also sometimes referred to as public servants in the judi-

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cial department. They seem to have been either lay officials exercising royal justice in places where qazis were not appointed, or administrative officers executing judgement, or qazic known by a different name. It is interesting to notice that various administrative manuals know nothing of them. The appointment orders as preserved in some of the collections of the letter books are again silent about them. The office is, however, mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari,* the *Akbar Nama,* the *Tuzak-i-Jahangiri,* the *Akhabarat* of Aurangzeb's reign and the *Muntkhib-ut-Tawarikh.* If Abul Fazl mentions it among the provincial offices in the twenty-fourth year of Akbar, the *Akhabarat* speaks of such an appointment on June 5, 1669, after the conquest of Nawanagar. In the first case no qazi is mentioned, in the second the qazi, the mufti and the sadr are all mentioned along with the mir-i-adls. An office which is mentioned so far apart must have existed but whether regular appointments were made thereto is extremely doubtful. The functions assigned to the office make it synonymous with that of the qazi. Abul Fazl makes it involve execution of sentences awarded. We know that in Akbar's reign no qazis were appointed for some time at Sirhind. It is likely that lay judges (as opposed to canon law lawyers) might have been appointed there to discharge judicial functions.

The superintendents of courts seem to have been qazis attached to the imperial court or the governor's court. We also hear of persons appointed to this office outside the capitals. Usually they also discharged the duties of the qazis.

Mughal Conception of Crime

Following the principles laid down elsewhere, crime was conceived as either a fall from divine grace, an offence against the ruler, or an offence against an individual. God, the ruler, and private citizens were supposed to be injured by the misdeeds of a wrongdoer. Crime was therefore a private affair—a thing between the offender, his God, his ruler, or the injured party. Most of the crimes, therefore, could be compounded for by arrangement between the parties. Crime against God could be expatiated by conversion to Islam in Aurangzeb's reign. Crime against the ruler could be wiped out by appropriate submission in proper time. Crimes against private citizens could be brought to an end by the aggrieved party's signing a declaration of satisfaction. Crime was not considered a social offence. Rather curiously, the emperor possessed no general power of pardon, like other private citizens he could remit sentences in offences against himself.

The state was concern more with the prevention of crime than its punishment. The kotwals stationed in most of the bigger towns were charged with its prevention. The muhtsib and his staff, similarly, put down crime against religion. The fojdars and the subahdars prevented serious disturbance of peace. The fojdar made arrangements for the safety of travellers by providing patrols.

Punishments, accordingly, took various forms, some of them unknown today. One of them was *Tashhir* (proclaiming aloud the offence of the offender by parading him among his fellow citizens). *Tobah* (repentance) could secure the release of many prisoners. Retaliation or exaction of blood money from the offenders by the aggrieved party or its representatives figures very much in the annals of the times. Execution was sometimes accompanied by horrible tortures. Maiming and torturing to death were supposed to be royal privileges in which even the princes of the royal blood were not allowed to indulge. Rebels captured in the commission of the crime or robbers with violence when arrested seem to have been a lawful prize even for subordinate officers and were executed usually without trial or sometimes after summary trial. The right of self-defence was recognized to a much larger extent than today. Thieves, if captured, were given short shrift and could be killed by those who pursued them.

Even if all crimes could not be described as offences against the emperor, the rulers seem to have had a comprehensive view of their judicial functions. It was to their honour that there should not be many offences against the state committed within their dominions. They took care to secure even-handed justice between private citizens so that the high should not prey upon the low. They exerted themselves so as to secure protection to citizens against their own public servants. If and when once they were apprised of any misconduct on the part of anyone, nothing could keep them from dealing appropriately with the offenders. Access was not always easy even with Jahangir's golden chain of justice which incidentally could have afforded relief—if any—to the injured persons only in the capital where the golden chain was installed.

CHAPTER XIII

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Offences Against the State

At the head of the list of crimes mentioned in the records of the Mughal period stood various types of offences against the safety of the state, the emperor in fact. They included rebellion against the king's authority, plotting to overthrow the king or compassing his death, waging war against the king, deserting to his enemies, serious discourtesy towards the king's person or his orders and infringement of the royal prerogatives. They concerned the ruler and therefore he was supposed to be personally interested in them. He became a party to the case and as such he could insist that the decision pronounced and the punishment given should satisfy him. He could not take the case to any higher court. The result was that the trial and punishment of such cases were ordered by the emperor himself. He would sometimes appoint a commission to find out the facts and report about the innocence or the guilt of the accused as Akbar did when Shah Mansur was accused of corresponding with the king's enemy, Hakim. Whether the king investigated such cases himself or had that done by others, the usual requirements of the Muslim law—confession, production of two disinterested eye-witnesses, or an affidavit by the parties—were not necessarily complied with. Personal conviction of the judges was all that was needed. Like a private citizen, the king exercised his right to choose the punishment which varied from shorter or longer term of imprisonment to death by poison, trampling under elephant's feet, or execution with or without confiscation of property. Highway robbery came next in its seriousness. It was an open declaration that king's government had ceased to function and thus it brought it into disrespect. The Muslim law was severe enough, demanding cutting off of hands and feet of the cri-

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minals and when their activities were accompanied by murder, excution. But the executive officers supplemented this by keeping notorious offenders in prison even when their crimes could not be proved according to the Muslim procedure. This would certainly facilitate collection of evidence against them whereupon they might be tried by the fojdar or the subahdar usually but by the subahdar and the qazi jointly under Aurangzeb. Sometimes armies were mobilized against bands of robbers infesting particular localities. Their punishment was then sharp and swift. Their heads were cut off and built into towers, some were roasted alive, others hanged. The Mughal emperors made the fojdars and the governors responsible for keeping their territories free from such malefactors. The victims of their depredations complained to the king. He would order the executive officers either to apprehend the criminals or make good the loss. Hence arose the interest of the fojdar and the governor in these cases.

Theft does not seen to have been very common in Mughal India. Most European travellers in the seventeenth century were surprised at the fact. When arrested and held guilty of the crime the thieves were required to make good the loss. Some were let off with a warning as first offenders; habitual criminals were detained in prison, more serious culprits had their hands and feet cut off.

Piracy at sea was a crime which the Mughals could not easily deal with. The Portuguese, the English and other Europeans in Indian waters sometime made a habit of molesting ships at sea including Indian ships. They proclaimed their right to piracy off the Indian coast by compelling Indian sailors to secure safe conduct passes from them. Sometime even the Mughal emperors had to acquiesce in this atrocious demand by providing their own ships with such passes. But the European merchants did not keep even such bargains. They infested the Indian waters and attacked Indian shipping even when the ships had provided themselves with the required safety passes. The emperors then usually took action against the Factors of the nation to which the culprits belonged, threatened them with reprisals, carried out their threat if it was not effective and brought the trade of offending nation to a standstill. Compensation for the loss suffered was demanded and received. The Factors were then left alone to carry out their own punishment on the offending member of their own nation as best as they could. Throughout the seventeenth century there is a continuous story of such acts of piracy. This culminated in the war between Aurangzeb and the English in which the English had to eat the humble pie ultimately by paying compensation for their acts.

The state was also interested in the punishment of its corrupt officials and oppressive public servants. Governors of provinces, district officers, kotwals and officers of the customs department sometime practised manifold acts of oppression on those under their charge or having dealings with them. They would like to pay their own prices for goods taken, they would sometimes carry away goods destined for others, some forcibly billeted themselves on citizens, money was very often demanded in one form or another to set the officials machinery in motion. They exacted not only forbidden taxes but sometimes invented new exactions of their own. Means of conveyance sometimes provoked quarrels as they do today; residence in resthouses, private or public, raised nice points of precedence and led to disputes. Some officers were not beyond taking possession of fellow officials' property and bodily removing their adherents. Others made themselves notorious for their indulgence in carnal pleasures respecting the honour of none. Some offended the religious feelings of their fellow subjects.

Their punishment never fitted their crimes. The oppressed people were usually satisfied if the offender was transferred. Demotion in office or salary was supposed to be keenly felt by the officers. Payment of compensation would sometimes make an officer go scot-free otherwise.

Of course dismissal from high office of an offender probably became a warning to others, though possibly it provided no real satisfaction to his victims. Imprisonment could sometime turn out to be a blessing in disguise both for the official and his victims. His imprisoment at the time would form a greater warning than his dismissal, but if it was not accompanied by dismissal he could hope to be reinstated some day.

It was otherwise when an officer was guilty of embezzlement. The state then put its entire machinery in motion to squeeze out the embezzled money from the official. He was imprisoned; sometimes his family also shared the same fate with him, his property was taken possession of and he was thus compelled to disgorge his ill-gotten gains.

It may be suggested that tales of oppression could easily have been carried to the governors or the emperor. The actual working of the machinery makes us doubt it. But it would be preposterous to suppose that the subjects in general were always oppressed and that just and God-fearing officials were a rarity. European records and travellers' accounts which form our main authority on the subject do not after all give us a large number of specific instances to support their general statements.

Other minor offences mentioned include counterfeiting coins, arson, stealing shrouds from tombs, poisoning, gambling and selling of wine and other intoxicants. Runaway slaves, alchemists and confidence men have also been referred to. Castrating was a crime, so was forcing a widow to burn herself at the funeral pyre of her husband. Under Jahangir selling of meat on prohibited days was severely punished. It was criminal under Akbar.

Religious offences

Religious offences included marriages between Muslims and Hindus, heresy, use of intoxicants, gambling, prostitution, apostasy, blasphemy, and during the later part of Aurangzeb's reign, listening to music and manufacture of toys representing animate beings. Hindus under Aurangzeb could be punished for dressing decently and riding good horses. The punishment for these offences varied from the death sentence for blasphemy and apostasy to varying sentences of fine and imprisonment for the lesser offences. Sometimes even heresy was punished with death. Blasphemy could take two forms, oral or written. and both, when proved, were severely punished. Hindus and Shias were usually found guilty of this offence, though very often it was provoked by similarly offensive language used towards their religious beliefs. The law provided the Hindus and the Shias no protection against blasphemy. Heresy again consisted in deviation from the orthodox Suni beliefs of the times. Its victims could, like Sarmad. blossom forth as saints who could work miracle even when dead. Marriages between Hindus and Muslims were held unlawful. Muslim offenders were seldom punished, they could allege previous conversion to Islam of their Hindu partners. Under Shah Jahan, once at least, a Hindu was punished with death by dismemberment for this offence which was held to involve the apostasy of his wife. Apostasy again protected the Sunnis. With regard to drinking, gambling and prostitution, the Mughal emperors were interested more in their suppression—though Akbar punished disorderly conduct alone—than in punishing the offenders Music and manufacture of toys were again suppressed. The punishment would usually take the form of the use of force during the process of dispersal. The horses of the Hindus were confiscated under Aurangzeb when the riders were found offending against his orders.

Other Crimes

All other crimes were offences against individuals in which the society as represented by the state was not much interested. Murder was an affair between the relatives of the murdered man and the murderer. If the murderer was apprehended and crime brought home to him, the presiding qazi would leave the punishment to the aggrieved party. It could vary from the transfer of an official to actual execution. Blood money was sometimes demanded and paid. A Muslim complainant under Aurangzeb could usually be persuaded to let the murderer go free if he became a Muslim. The rightful heir of the deceased could kill the murderer himself even without a trial. Certain forms of murder as by strangulation, drowning, or poison were looked upon with leniency in the Muslim law and therefore probably in Mughal India as well.

Adultery, fornication and sodomy are mentioned sometimes in the records. In most cases the aggrieved party exercised its right of retaliation as it was usually impossible to prove the crime by the usual Muslim procedure of confession or the evidence of eye-witnesses.

Trials

The Mughal emperors were anxious to secure the speedy trial of prisoners. They were usually defaulters in land revenue, offenders against whom cases were pending before the qazis, or persons alleged to be arrested by the kotwal's staff in the very act of committing an offence. The kotwals in the cities and fojdars in the rural districts were ordered to act promptly in all such cases. Cases of arrears were to be reported at once to the governors so that the revenue officials could not keep defaulters in prison indefinitely. In the case of other accused where cases lay between private citizens the complainants were asked to seek redress in appropriate courts. When the qazi sent an accused to the kotwali (prison), he specified the offence and notified the next date of trial in writing under his own hand. If this was not done, the kotwal sent the prisoners to the qazi's court every day to remind him that a trial was due. The kotwal released those prisoners who were wrongfully arrested. Once a month the governor went through the list of prisoners in the diwani courts and police custody to secure their speedy trial.

Certain aspects of the Mughal criminal code deserve notice. It made distinction between first offenders and habituals. It sometimes gave the accused the opportunity of confessing his crime and expressing repentance for it, he was then treated leniently. Its method of leaving the punishment for murder to the aggrieved party seems to have made capital punishment rare in murder cases. Imprisonment was not a method of punishment that appealed to the Mughals generally and was seldom used as a sentence in private cases though it was sometimes resorted to for preventive purposes. Whipping seems to have been more largely recommended for certain crimes. The death punishment, it is usually suggested, had to be confirmed by the emperors. In actual practice even in the reign of Jahangir, when this order is stated to have originated, one finds provincial governors carrying it out on their own. Impaling, dismemberment, trampling under the feet of elephants and throwing victims to the beasts of the jungle were barbarous punishments which were limited in their incidence as they were inflicted by the orders of the emperors alone. Any protest by the subjects could be easily magnified into rebellion by the local officials. They could, then, let their passions loose on their victims. The Muslim punishment of parading the offender in an ignominious condition too seems to have been resorted to as it coincided with Indian traditions as well.

APPENDIX

SOME CASES

Much has been written on Mughal administration. Very often, however, the authorities available tell us the way the things were supposed to be done. For the reign of Aurangzeb there are ample materials which throw light on how the administration was carried on in practice. The following fifteen cases are taken from the Akhabarat (Provincial) of Ajmer of the forty-sixth year of Aurangzeb's reign discovered in 1940 by me at Hyderabad (Deccan). The last ten cases have been selected from the Akhabarat and the Jaipur Records in the library of Sir Jadunath Sarkar.

(i) Widow of Mania v. Sundar. The widow of Mania laid a complaint against Sundar for the death of her husband. The offender being summoned pleaded guilty. He was kept in prison as the Hindus neither exact retaliation nor accept blood money.

(ii) Son of Chatta v. Pir Muhammad and others. Sons of Chatta deceased presented a plaint before the Qazi that Pir Muhammad had beaten their father to death in the fort. Pir Muhammad was summoned and he pleaded not guilty. The plaintiffs were called upon to produce eyewitnesses of the incident. They produced two such witnesses and proved Pir Muhammad guilty. The qazi then declared that it was open to the complainants either to ask for Pir Muhammad's execution or demand blood money. They said they would be content if two of his companions were dismissed and turned out of the fort. All the three agreed thereto and they were dismissed and expelled from the fort.

(iii) Iftikhar Khan, Governor of Ajmer, held court and heard cases. He decided some of them according to the law and made over the rest to the qazi.

(iv) Gangaram v. Muhammad Alim. Gangaram of Ajmir sought justice at the hands of the emperor. The Chief Qazi sent the case to the provincial governor for inquiry and report. The inquiry was held by the provincial governor and the report submitted in three instalments. The provincial governor found the complaint baseless and ordered that Gangaram's widowed daughter be sent to the Chief Qazi in order to demonstrate to the latter how baseless complaints were manufactured by some people.

(v) Kaisu and others v. Man. Kaisu filed a suit in Iftikhar Khan's (the governor's) court that Man, the dismissed karori, had realized land revenue and embezzled the collections. When he was dismissed he destroyed the papers. It was ordered that the Amin of Arrears should hold an inquiry.

(vi) Gori v. Shahab-ud-Din and Others. Dana instituted a case before the qazi on behalf of Gori alleging that Shahab-ud-Din and Harikishan had beat her husband to death. The qazi asked for evidence. Two witnesses were produced. After their evidence had been recorded it was discovered that they were not conforming Muslims and therefore their evidence was not admissible. The vakil said that he had no other evidence to produce. Further inquiry revealed the fact that the deceased died several days after the alleged beating. The suit was dismissed.

(vii) Kanga Patwari v. thieves. A theft occurred at the house of Kanga Patwari of Badhvara resulting in a loss Rs. 285. The marks of the thieves' feet were followed up to Nonyavas. Narsingh Das, its thanadar and a mansabdar of 130, declared that he had no knowledge of any thieves in his place.

(viii) Parasram v. thieves. A theft occurred at the house of Parasram of Raj Nagar. He was an agent of Raj Singh whose watchmen ran after the thieves. Near Nonyavas they killed three thieves and recovered their property.

(ix) The governor held court. Most of the cases were referred to the Qazi. After the inquiry whatever the qazi said should be paid was ordered by the governor to be paid.

(x) Sayam Ram v. Kaisri Singh and Jivraj. Sayam Ram of Nagore asserted that six years ago he had agreed to purchase 80,000 maunds of corn from Kaisri Singh and Jivraj, agents of Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and paid Rs. 230 in advance. They neither delivered the corn nor did they pay back the money. Sayam Ram lodged a complaint with the emperor who sent orders first to the fojdar for investigation and then to the governor. Iftikhar Khan sent sawars to Jodhpur for local inquiry. Kaisri Singh and others denied the complaint and sent a certified declaration to that effect. Sayam Ram was then asked if he had any witnesses. He said that he had many at Jodhpur but they would not probably support him out of fear of the opposite party. He was, however, prepared to give up his claim if the opposite party denied his claim on oath. The qazi ordered that as they denied the plaint, they should be asked to take the oath. The vakil of Maharaja Jaswant Singh now intervened and said that the Hindus avoided taking oaths as far as possible. The calling of those agents to the provincial governor's court was objectionable. The governor submitted this report to the emperor asking for further instructions.

(xi) Kanwal Vijya v. Pant Vijya and Others. Kanwal Vijya lodged a complaint in the emperor's court. Shaikh-us-Islam (the Chief Qazi) sent an imperial order to the governor for local investigation. The governor sent the case to the qazi.

The qazi summoned both the parties. The defendants denied the claim of the plaintiff who had no witnesses. The qazi ordered the defendants to state on oath that they owed the plaintiff nothing. They said they were willing to do so. The complainant said he also was willing to take the oath. The qazi did not allow him to do so, dismissed the suit and reported to the governor.

The governor submitted that as the local investigation had not yielded a satisfactory result, he would, if ordered, send both the parties to the royal court.

(xii) Mohan Singh v. thieves. Mohan Singh reported that some thieves visited his village and drove away some buffaloes. The villagers followed the thieves and killed two of them. No property was recovered. The heads of the thieves were presented before the governor who ordered these to be exhibited on trees.

(xiii) The case of Anand Chand Shaikhawat of Manoharpur. A complaint was made against him at the royal court. It was said that he tried at first to kill his son and later on killed four persons. Zahad Beg, royal messenger, was sent to the provincial governor to get Anand Chand sent to the royal court.

The governor started investigations. He ordered that the accused be sent to the royal court.

Then came Bishan Das, Vakil of Anand Chand. He submitted on behalf of his master that his son and brother were against him and were thus piling up complaints against him. The governor countermanded his first order and sent to the royal court the depositions taken.

(xiv) Bhoja v. Gopal and Others. Bhoja lodged a complaint that he had paid Gopal Rs. 1,000 in cash and commodities. He had previously lodged a complaint when Darab Khan was the fojdar. Gopal had then accepted the claim to the extent of Rs. 60 and some tolas of silver. Darab Khan kept this amount with Bhola who was Gopal's surety. Bhoja had then refused to be satisfied with this decree and had lodged a complaint in the governor's court. All the three defendants were absent but Bhola, the surety and supurddar (custodian), was present. He denied that he was either. The qanungo and Mahajans said that he was both. His beard was cropped and he was paraded round the city. He then expressed his willingness to pay Rs. 60. Bhoja however declined to receive this amount.

(xv) Widow of Lal Chand v. Dait Chand, son of Lal Chand. Lal Chand's widow complained against her son for recovery of Rs. 1,880. Qazi Abdur Razak got the case compromised. The widow gave up the claim. The renunciation of her rights attested by the qazi was sent to the royal court.

Some more cases from the *Akhabarat* and the *Jaipur Records* are also reproduced below.

(xvi) In October 25, 1693, it was ordered that when a complainant lodged a complaint at the imperial court he should be supplied with the necessary messengers by the provincial governor.

(xvii) Damodar was in prison along with another thief. They gave surety in July 1694, that if there was a theft in the army, they would be held responsible. They furnished a reliable security and were let off.

(xviii) The qazi of Mathura complained that the kotwal of Mathura decided all cases himself. On December 24, 1692, the qazi was transferred.

(xix) Muhammad Masaud submitted that there were several prisoners in the fort and that permission be given to release them. It was ordered that except the murderer of a faqir, who had confessed to his crime, all others be let off.

(xx) On February 14, 1704 it was laid down that the complainant should search for the accused if he be not found.

(xxi) The emperor heard several cases of disputed titles to lands and decided them.

(xxii) On Safar 17 in the year 46 of Aurangzeb's reign, the descendants of Sunder Lal deposed in the court of the governor of Gujarat that Tulsi owed Sundar Lal money. He called the latter to his house and there killed him. Tulsi then absconded. The governor ordered his superintendent of court to write to the provincial qazi asking him to determine the case according to the law. The governor showed his irritation on being thus troubled and added: "Are there no qazis to render justice in the city that you resort to my court?"

(xxiii) Mir Ahmad Bakhshi submitted in the royal court (year 46) that Khaliq Beg and Ahmed Beg owed a Bania Rs. 100|-and that an order be sent to the provincial governor to deduct the sum from their salary so that others be warned. It was ordered that the governor be written to accordingly.

(xxiv) Ghulam Muhammad, superintendent of the court, presented a complainant on Rabi-us-Sani 13 (year 46) and said that Sayyid Kamal Fojdar had exacted Rs. 10,000 from him by force. The governor ordered that the Mir Bakhshi should hold an inquiry and report.

(xxv) Tulsidas of Rajputana submitted to the governor that he started business in partnership with Pir Muhammad Bohra. His partner took forcible possession of Rs. 50,000. It was ordered that the Fojdar be asked to decide the case according to the law and facts.

(xxvi) Tulsidas of Rajputana submitted in the governor's court that Bulbal Das owed him Rs. 4,000 for which he held his written acknowledgment. It was ordered that he should go to the qazi.

CHAPTER XIV

INDIAN STATES

The Indian States

When the Mughals began their conquest of India, there were several independent kingdoms in the country, besides the Lodhi rulers of Delhi. In the Punjab Hills, Kashmir, Jammu, Nurpur, Chamba, Mandi, Suket, Kullu, Basohli, Guler, Dada, Jaswan, and Siba were independent, besides several smaller chieftainships surviving till 1947. In Rajputana, Mewar, Marwar Ranthambore Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Bundi, Kotah, Banswara, Dongarpur, Sirohi and Jalore enjoyed more on less independent powers. Kumaon and Srinagar (Garhwal) retained their independence throughout the sixteenth century. Rewa, Gwalior, Orchha and Bundelkhand in Central India came into clash with the Mughal rulers in the sixteenth century. In Gujarat there were several rulers more or less dependent of the Sultan of Gujrat—Salher, Malher, Ramnayar, Nawanagar, Rajpipla, Kutch, Ali and Mohan. Independent Bengal had its twelve Bhumiya, chiefs whose titles extended to the times before the formation of the existing kingdom of Bengal. Jessore, Bhusna, Panchet, Hijili, Bhowal, Bikrampur, Chandardip, Khizrpur, Sripur, Kuch Bihar, Kamrup (Assam), Puri, Shubshang, Fatehabad, Bakha, Kokna (Orissa), Kachar, have been specifically mentioned in the memoirs of a Mughal officer in Bengal under Jahangir. Nathan further mentions eighteen Rajas of Pandu separately. In the south the Bahmani kingdom was splitting into the five succession states of Golkonda, Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Berar, and Bider. Of these Berar had only a short life and was swallowed into Ahmednagar in 1574. Bidar became a provice of Golkonda in 1609. Ahmednagar, Golkonda and Bijapur maintained some contact with the Mughals at first as independent states, then as feudatories and were finally incorporated into the Mughal empire. Vijayanagar never came into contact with the Mughals, but its offshoots, the kingdoms of Madura and Tanjore, were still ruling parts of the south when Aurangzeb finally swallowed Golkonda and Bijapur. In the Deccan as well, there were several smaller kingdoms existing as feudatories of Bijapur, Golkonda and Vijayanagar. Some of them continued that status under the Mughals as well. Travancore, Cochin and Tanjore were more or less independent.

Feudatories

In theory the Mughal rulers made no distinction between territories ruled by themselves and feudatory princes. Akbar adopted the custom of giving back the territories of his vanquished foes to them ostensibly as an imperial gift, enrolling the rulers among his mansabdars. When a ruler died his successor received his territories as a mansabdar from the Mughal emperor. A distinction was made between ordinary mansabdars and hereditary rulers by granting the latter *watan* jagirs in their homelands. These the ruler-mansabdars continued enjoying from generation to generation, though a new Farman was issued every time in favour of a new chief. The official historians never recognized that anyone else had the right to rule any part of India and called even the rulers of the most ancient dynasties only zamindars. If they showed any inclination to retain their independence, they were dubbed 'rebels', 'disturbers of peace', if not worse.

Of course there were some rulers who did not at first accept a mansab. When Mewar submitted under Jahangir, Rana Amar Singh did not enroll himself as a mansabdar. His son Karan however was given a mansab. This naturally led to Karan's retaining the mansab when he became the Rana. Thus the rulers of Mewar also became mansabdars. But the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* seems to imply that certain rajas in Gujarat paid tribute and were presumably not mansabdars. It is possible that there were similar rulers elsewhere as well. It is difficult to ascertain why these rulers were not given mansabs. The only feasible explanation seems to be that in their hurry to consolidate their power in Gujarat, the Mughal rulers made whatever treaty arrangements they could with the subordinate chiefs and respected their wishes.

But mansabdar-princes formed the rule. Out of this fact arose the Mughal claim in theory at least to regulate the succession in various states. A mansabdar held his jagir at the pleasure of the emperor and by virtue of his order. When a Raja or Nawab died, in theory his mansab, and therefore his jagir, came to an end. His successor could assume power only by virtue of a new royal order. But in most states no interregnum was allowed. As soon as one raja died, his successor took office. The Mughal claim in cases of uncontested succession was only formal. The new ruler expected the royal order as a matter of course and started exercising his authority long before the imperial order came.

But contested successions gave the Mughal emperors their opportunity. If more than one son of the last ruler laid claim to the state, one or the other was likely to claim imperial support. The Mughals themselves acknowledged no law of succession. When a subordinate principality displayed this characteristic, they decided the case as they thought fit. Sur Singh, the sixth son of Udai Singh of Jodhpur, followed his father to the exclusion of his eldest son. Dalpat, a younger son of Rai Singh of Bikaner, was installed as the ruler by Jahangir's active interference. After Man Singh's death in Jaipur, his grandson Sur Singh was excluded in favour of one of his uncles. Amarsingh of Jodhpur was disinherited by his father with imperial approval. After Jaswant Singh's death, Aurangzeb nominated Prithvi Singh as his successor to the exclusion of the raja's posthumous son.

A study of departures from the strict line of succession reveals the interesting fact that in certain cases, the departures were initiated by the Rajput rulers themselves in their own lifetime. Sometimes a prince was disinherited by his father, on other occasions a doting father would express a desire to secure the succession in favour of some favourite son. Naturally if the rajas could alter the succession, so could the emperor. Jahangir expressly claims this right in his *Memoirs*. Aurangzeb exercised it in Jodhpur after Jaswant's death. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the affected princes did not readily acknowledge the Mughal claim to regulate the succession. The Mughal emperors were usually asked to approve departures initiated by the reigning rulers. When the Mughal emperors acted on their own those adversely affected did not submit without protest.

Akbar began the custom of putting the *Tika* mark on the forehead of the new Rajahs if they happened to be at court. Jahangir continued the practice. Shah Jahan delegated this function to his Diwan and Aurangzeb discontinued it altogether.

The Rajahs' Vakils

The princes maintained their contacts with the Mughal administration through their vakils (agents). Two of them were usually maintained; one at the court of the provincial governor, the other at the imperial court. The vakil at the imperial court was usually a very able man—one able to pursuade his master that the imperial commands must be obeyed and also suave enough to turn the keen edge of imperial wrath away when the emperor happened to dislike anything done by his master. Raja Sur Singh of Jodhpur maintained his Prime Minister as his vakil at the imperial court. The vakil kept his master informed about all that was happening at the court usually by sending to him the daily reports of the work done by the king in the *Durbar-i–Am-o-Khas*. The emperor used the imperial post for transmitting his orders to the rulers. Sometimes they were transmitted through the provincial governor. When any delay occurred in their execution the vakil would make excuses for his master, but undertake that the imperial commission would be carried out. Usually whenever an imperial order was sent to a prince, his vakil would also write to him explaining the background and recommending the course of action most acceptable to the emperor.

Imperial Interference

No imperial agents were maintained in the states. The qazis whom we find functioning even in the Hindu states seem, however, to have been imperial agents of sorts. The provincial governor also usually kept himself well posted about what concerned his imperial master.

The provincial governor was the symbol of imperial power. There was no theoretical limit to his power of supervision and interference in the state administration when either the interests of the emperor or of his subjects in the imperial territory were concerned. But the emperor and the governor had both to depend upon the prince's willingness to execute the orders received: there were no imperial administrators capable of carrying them out on their own. The state administration could well parade its loyal intentions without intending in the least to carry out its undertakings.

But certain imperial laws were intended to be effective in the states as well. When Akbar tried to stop the custom of unwilling Satis, he enforced it against a Rajput ruling house as well. Aurangzeb levied the jizya in the states though it seems to have been paid by the rulers rather than by their subjects. Aurangzeb destroyed some Hindu temples in the states during the execution of his policy of temple destruction. In order to safeguard the ruling prices of salt in the imperial territories, Aurangzeb threatened to destroy the salt industry in Jaipur if the Rajah did not raise the price of salt in his own territories. When certain exactions were forbidden in the imperial territories it was hoped, though without much reasons, that they would not be levied in the states. When the English got their duties fixed at a lump sum by imperial order, they hoped they would not have to pay any additional taxes even in the territories of the princes. Their hopes were belied.

Princely Contingents

When a prince was not himself serving in the Mughal administration as a mansabdar in a civil or military capacity, he provided a contingent for imperial service wherever needed. When Amar Singh of Mewar submitted, he undertook to place at the disposal of the imperial government 1,000 soldiers. We find them in the Deccan in 1657. Unlike the Imperial Service Troops of British days, the state contingents in Mughal India were always stationed in the imperial territories during peace or war.

The Ranas of Mewar

Among the feudatory princes, the Ranas of Mewar occupied a very important position. Mewar was conquered after several hard-fought campaigns during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir. When Amar Singh made peace with Jahangir, it was understood that a reigning prince of Mewar would never serve in the Mughal administration. Though Karan, the crown prince, was given a high mansab he never actually served in the Mughal army. The Mewar contingent for imperial service usually served under a Rajput commander of a lesser rank. Mewar continued as a state entirely independent in the ordering of its own affairs. Unlike Jaipur and Jodhpur, its rulers neither disinherited their eldest princes, nor did they ever alter the order of succession in favour of a favourite son. No one among them owed the throne to the personal favour of a Mughal emperor. When Khurram fled to Mewar after his unsuccessful rebellion against his father, Rana Jagat Singh, unmindful of the imperial wrath, gave him shelter. Jahangir took no action against him then. When Raj Sing came to the throne, Shah Jahan made war upon him for the breach of the terms of the treaty which in Jahangir's time had been concluded between Mewar and Delhi. The Ranas had undertaken not to repair nor add to the demolished fort of Chitor. When Raj Singh not only carried out repairs but added new fortifications to the fort rendering its capture difficult, Shah Jahan first made inquiries and then sent a force to demolish the additions and repairs. In the negotiations that followed several other causes of Shah Jahan's wrath against Mewar came out. When on a pilgrimage, the

Rana had been freely moving about in imperial territories with large forces and making large donations there. He had given shelter to his own uncle, Gharib Dass, when he had fled from the imperial court. He had not supplied 1000 horsemen for general service and had not done so even when asked to supply this contingent for service in Qandahar and the Deccan. As the result of the war, the additions to the fort were demolished and the Rana undertook to send a contingent for service in the Deccan. Not content with this, Shah Jahan annexed several districts in the neighbourhood of Ajmer. These annexations cost Dara his chances of succession to the throne as Aurangzeb bought the help of Rana Raj Singh by allowing him to incorporate these districts in his dominions again in 1658. Mewar was content with this gain. But when in 1679, Aurangzeb decided to reimpose jizya on the Hindus, after a spirited protest, the Rana joined the Rathors in defence of Jodhpur against Aurangzeb. He incited the rebellion of Muhammad Akbar and during the course of the military operations the Rana's eldest son carried out plundering expeditions into Gujarat. But Raj Singh died during the Rajput war and his successor Jai Singh made peace by surrendering the districts that Raj Singh had reannexed during the 'War of Succession'. Aurangzeb was further consoled by the statement in the treaty that these districts were surrendered in lieu of the jizya. But Jai Singh took the new treaty to supersede the older one of Jahangir's time and refused to send a contingent in imperial service. Ultimately Aurangzeb gave back the districts in 1690. Jai Singh undertook to pay the jizya in cash in four instalments and to send a contingent of 1000 soldiers as before. Jai Singh died in 1698, his son Amar Singh succeeded him. Aurangzeb delayed sending him the royal Farman recognizing his succession, but this made no difference to his authority in Mewar. He revenged himself by not sending the promised contingent for imperial service. Aurangzeb needed a contingent in the Deccan badly and bought it by giving Sarohi and Abu as a personal jagir to Amar Singh in 1702. A Sisodia contingent was sent for service under Azam in Malwa.

This story of the relations between Mewar and Delhi illustrates certain features of the relations between the Mughal emperors and the Indian states which, even if they are exceptional to Mewar, tell us what the Mughal emperors were prepared to permit in some states. The Mughal approval of the succession seems to have been a formality the absence of which made no difference in Mewar. The Ranas continued pressing their own inherent claims on the neighbouring districts, without taking any notice of the imperial orders assigning those territories to others. Even the obligation to send 1000 horse was not always discharged. The emperors would not permit Mewar to regain her independence by strengthening her resources—probably the Ranas had no such intentions themselves. The payment of the jizya in cash from 1690 formed a tribute even though it was the revenue of the districts which had once been under Mewar. Under the circumstances there could have been no interference in the internal administration of Mewar. The Mughals did not attempt any regulation of inter-state relations so far as Mewar was concerned and left it to its own devices for settling its claims on its neighbours even when those neighbours were Mughal mansabdars.

Bijapur

The story of the Mughal relations with Bijapur and Golkonda reveals another aspect of Mughal relations with Indian states. Akbar was content to exchange costly gifts with them. The furthest he got was the marriage of his son Daniyal to a princess from Bijapur. Bijapur's fears of Malik Ambar of Ahmednagar led Adil Shah to seek a Mughal alliance against him in 1623 and he received the imperial orders accepting his submission with all the honours due from a Mughal mansabdar and agreed to place a contingent of 5,000 horse at the disposal of the Mughals. Though intended to be a permanent contribution to Mughal military strength, this contingent was recalled when Bijapur was besieged in 1624 and was never sent again. In 1632 Shah Jahan sent an army to invade Bijapur because its ruler had not sent any embassy to the emperor on his succession. In 1636 a new treaty was concluded between the Mughals and Muhammad Adil Shah of Bijapur whereby the Mughals gave Bijapur a substantial share of the Ahmednagar territories in return for a lump sum payment of Rs. 20,00,000 and Mughal control of the relations between Bijapur and Golkonda. Muhammad Adil Shah vaguely recognized Shah Jahan as his sovereign. During the course of the twenty years that followed Shah Jahan interpreted his sovereignty so as to compel Muhammad aAil Shah to retain pro-Mughal officers in his service and prevent him from following certain customs of the imperial court touching the emperor's prerogative. But to all intents and purposes Adil Shah remained an independent prince. After his death in 1656, Shah Jahan sanctioned an invasion of Bijapur on the fictitious plea that the new ruler of Bijapur was not his father's child. The alleged right of the emperor to regulate succession in Bijapur was hotly contested by the Bijapuris. Shah Jahan's armies invaded Bijapur. As the result of the invasion, Ali Shah undertook to pay an indemnity of Rs. 10,00,000 and return to the Mughals a part of the Ahmednagar territories that Shah Jahan had given to his father in 1636. The indemnity was partially paid in instalments, partly remitted for service against Shivaji in 1660. But its major portion remained unpaid when Jai Singh made war on Bijapur in 1665. In 1668 the Mughals wrested Sholapur. Diplomatic relations with Bijapur came into prominence in 1684 when Aurangzeb made certain demands on its ruler as on a vassal prince; Adil Shah was to expel his faithful minister Shiraz Khan, instead of helping the Marathas he was to supply a contingent of horse for service in the imperial army operating against them. Even passage for the Mughal troops was demanded. The task of provisioning the Mughal armies in the Deccan was entrusted to Adil Shah. On his refusal to comply with these demands Bijapur was besieged and ultimately reduced in 1686.

Golkonda

Mughal-Golkonda relations stress another side of Mughal diplomacy. Akbar and Jahangir had left it mostly alone. Shah Jahan as a rebel prince had sought alliance with Golkonda. When emperor, he respected the independence of Golkonda for some time. But in 1636, he put forward certain very stringent claims on Golkonda. Instead of reading the Khutba in the name of the Shia Shah of Persia, it was to be read in the name of the Mughal emperor who was thus to be acknowledged the overlord of Golkonda. Coins struck in Golkonda were to be in the name of Shah Jahan. The king and his Muslim subjects were arrogantly asked to change their religion and become Sunnis. An annual tribute of Rs. 6,00,000 was also imposed. The Mughal historians would have us believe that the ruler of Golkonda renounced his religion and undertook to spread the Sunni faith in his dominions. This demand exhibits a novel feature in the relations between a feudatory state and the Mughal emperor and shows the length to which the Mughal supremacy could be stretched. If the Mughal emperor was to decide the variety of Islam to be followed by a Muslim feudatory chief and his subjects, his intervention in the internal affairs of a state would know no limits. In 1655 Shah Jahan demanded the release of Mir Jumla's son whom the king of Golkonda had imprisoned for his insolent conduct. Shah Jahan sanctioned the plan of his viceroy of the Deccan to take offensive action against Golkonda if its ruler did not pay the instalments of the revenue due to the Mughals or did not release Mir Jumla and his son. Aurangzeb sent his son to Golkonda on the plea that he was going to Bengal. When he was inside the state, military operations were started. The king's acceptance of the royal demands was not communicated to Shah Jahan promptly, but when he learnt of it, Shah Jahan accepted it and ordered Aurangzeb to cease hostilities as the purpose for which the Mughal expedition had been sent had been fulfilled. Aurangzeb, however, continued military operations till he had married his son, Mohammad Sultan, to a princess of Golkonda and made its ruler accept his new son-in-law as his heir, as he had no son of his own. But when in 1667 Abdullah died, any claims that Muhammad Sultan may have had were easily ignored and Abul Hasan succeeded his father-in-law in Golkonda. As the annual tribute was paid regularly, Aurangzeb did not care to take the offensive against Golkonda. In 1685 when he had moved down to the Deccan for good, Aurangzeb made Golkonda's intentions to help Bijapur a cause of war. A new treaty was forced on Qutb Shah who undertook to pay Rs. 1,20,00,000 as arrears of past tribute, increase the future payments to Rs. 60,00,000 a year and dismiss his Brahman ministers. When Bijapur fell, Golkonda was duly attacked and finally conquered in 1687.

In the case of Bijapur and Golkonda, we find the Mughal emperors pressing their military advantage hard whenever they discovered any cause of weakness in either state. Golkonda had become a tributory state in 1636 and the Mughals had here tried to do what they dared not do in their own imperial territories—penalize the Shia faith openly and vehemently. Later Mughal claims for interference took the form of removing anti-Mughal ministers. In Bijapur, regulation of succession had been claimed as an imperial prerogative without success. But under Aurangzeb relations with these two kingdoms were always in a state of unstable equilibrium. Unlike Shah Jahan he had no wish to allow these two states to exist even as tributory states. Despite the open opposition of his chief theologian—Shaikh-us-Islam—he was bent upon incorporating these two states into the Mughal territories and always discovered some cause for making further demands on them.

Mughal Policy Towards States

These three cases have been studied in order to illustrate the Mughal conception of imperial status. That the states themselves did not very often agree with the Mughal conception is not very surprising. The only state where the Mughals never claimed any greater right of interference than that guaranteed to them in the treaties was Mewar. Everywhere else the usage and practices of the Mughal political department overrode treaty rights, as was the custom of its British counterpart later. The emperors acknowledged no law higher than their imperial will. Again as during British days, suzerainty was indefinable because to define it is to limit it. In actual practice, however, most of the states were allowed almost complete autonomy in their internal administration.

The internal administration exhibits varying degrees of medievalism, not unmixed with despotism. In the Rajput states their tribal organization still persisted, modified here and there by Mughal practices. Here the ruler was the chief of the tribe much more than the administrator of the territory under him. The larger portion of the land in the Rajput states was held by the jagirdars by hereditary tenures. In most states certain important functions were discharged by hereditary functionaries. The Mughal practices led to a much more precise defining of precedence among the jagirdars. The absence of the rulers, of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Bikaner particularly, on imperial service outside their states, naturally increased the power of their Diwans, the Pradhans as they now came to be called. Another very interesting feature of the Rajput administration of the times was the tradition that some of the states were governed by gods, the rulers being their agents. Mewar was thus supposed to be an appendage of god Eklinga whose Diwans the rulers were supposed to be. Of course most of the Rajput states now developed a Persian secretariat primarily to cope with the imperial correspondence. Local loyalties were sometimes shaken on account of the temptations of Mughal service where the disaffected could easily find refuge.

CHAPTER XV

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

When Babur replaced Ibrahim Lodhi on the throne of Delhi, he seems to have continued most of the existing officials in their posts. His was not an administrative genius. He made little changes, if any, in the administration. His son Humayun loved to experiment in all directions but he again seems to have only called in astrology to his help so far as administrative organization was concerned. Sher Shah put new life in the administrative institutions that had been carried on mainly from the Sultanate. He revived the administrative traditions of Ala-ud-Din, Firoz Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodhi. But it was the institutions of the Sultanate that came alive under him.

Of course the Sultans did not carry on all the work of the government in all parts of their empire themselves. They made arrangements for government in the mofussil through their administrators. They even created certain units of administration. But they failed in creating a well-organized, uniform system of provincial administration. Their Hakims (or Maliks or Muqtas) in the various garrison towns were mainly leaders of the units of the army stationed there as a garrison. They sometimes made agreements with the central government, undertaking to pay it a stipulated amount out of the revenue of the areas under them. The feudatory chiefs were in direct relations with the central government and paid their tributes to the king. The administrators did not stand at the head of an administrative organization functioning throughout the empire in the same way. Most of these administrative units were small in area. Even Sher Shah left much of this intact. The areas under the administrators remained small, their power and authority varied with the individual administrator. In revenue matters they had no hand, the officers in the parganahs seem to have dealt directly with the central government. Of course local administration was carried on in various places under the rules and regulations laid down by Sher Shah. Land revenue was collected, justice dispensed, and peace kept in various parts of the empire through the agencies he set up. But there were no provinces in the sense of large slices of the empire, there was no provincial government supervising, co-ordinating and holding together the various governmental agencies in that area.

Akbar's Innovations

It was left to Akbar to tread new paths in administration. He was not a mere reviver. He sometimes made a clean break with the past. Among the alterations which he effected in the government of the country was the establishment of a regular system of provincial administration. For the small units of administration numbering some fifty in Sher Shah's days, he substituted a division of the empire in twelve provinces. Slowly and steadily he endowed every province with a set of administrators representing all the branches of the imperial activities. The smaller units and officials therein were all brought within the framework of the provincial administration. The provinces covered the whole of the imperial territory; there were no feudatory princes left in direct contact with the central government alone. Thus the entire outline of the provincial government was soon filled. A uniform administrative practice for all parts of the empire was soon developed; Persian became the one official language everywhere. Provincial government was thus established, maintained and developed.

Every one of the twelve original provinces—and the ten that were formed later on—was further subdivided into mahals, sarkars or doabs, as in the Punjab. Their total number ranged between 134 and 192. The sarkars were further subdivided into parganahs. Their number varied from 2874 to 4152. A parganah was a collection of a large number of villages. Usually there were several hundreds of them in a parganah as in their modern equivalent, Tahsil, Taluqa, or subdistrict.

Every one of these units had a set of administrators of its own. At the provincial capital resided the governor known as the Subah, Subahdar, or Nazim, the provincial diwan, the bakhshi, the newswriter, the diwan-i-bayutat, the kotwal, the sadr, the qazi, and under Aurangzeb the muhtsib and the provincial collector of jizya. The maritime provinces had mutsaddis, i.e., collectors of customs as well. Some of the frontier provinces had thanadars (garrison commanders) stationed in places of strategic importance. Some provinces where rivers formed the only means of communication during the rainy season (*e.g. Bengal*) had a superintendent of boats stationed there, while several had a superintendent of artillery, particularly when military operations were on.

The original provinces were Kabul, Punjab, Multan, Delhi, Agra, Oudh, Allahabad, Bihar, Bengal, Malwa, Ajmer, and Gujarat. To these were added during Akbar's lifetime Berar, Khandesh, and Ahmadnagar (later on known as Daulatabad). Orissa was separated from Bengal, Kashmir from Kabul, Sindh from Multan and Bidar from Ahmednagar, to form separate provinces under Jahangir and Shah Jahan. The conquest of Golkonda and Bijapur under Aurangzeb added two more to the number. Qandahar was also a Mughal province for a short period. Thus officially the provinces were reckoned at twenty-two in Aurangzeb's reign though in reality their number did not exceed twenty-one at any one time.

In the north every province had a governor and an appropriate set of provincial administrators to look after its interests. Akbar however began the custom of placing the three Deccanese provinces under one governor. Under Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb the principle of multiple charges was extended to the north as well. We seldom have as many governors as there were provinces. But when a governor was in charge of more than one province, he appointed deputies in the provinces where he did not reside himself. There were usually as many sets of provincial administrations as there were provinces.

The Provincial Governor

By whatever name known, the provincial governor was placed at the head of the provincial administration, He was charged with maintaining peace and preserving order—duties which were comprehensive enough to bring under his supervision normally the administration of all the departments so far as carrying out imperial orders was concerned. He put down local rebellions, carried out minor military operations on his own in the province or the neighbouring areas. He dispensed justice and listened to complaints against public servants in the province. He recommended imperial officers stationed in the province for promotion and imperial honours. He collected the tributes due from the local feudatory chiefs and remitted them to the capital. He was responsible for securing that the feudatory contingents from the states in his province were duly despatched for service in the province or elsewhere. The feudatory chiefs usually maintained vakils (agents) at his court. He kept the emperor informed of whatever was happening in the province. He carried out the orders he received from the emperor. He acted almost as a deputy of the emperor in the province. He could not make war on a feudatory state in the province or an independent prince in the neighbourhood without the permission of the emperor. When he made peace, the terms made were subject to ratification by the emperor, who would tone them down or reject them as inadequate if he thought it necessary.

He lived in great state. Islam Khan, governor of Bengal, kept a court and exacted ceremonious behaviour from the provincial administrators in such a way that Jahangir was compelled to issue a comprehensive code laying down what the provincial governors were not permitted to do. European observers were struck with the 'style' kept by the governors of Gujarat who, they declared, kept better court than most kings of Europe. Usually the governor was a mansabdar of high rank between 2000er to 5000er or more and as such the premier public servant in the province. In the year 1700, the governor of Oudh was a 2500er, of Burhanpur a 2000er and of Bihar a 3000er; Bengal had a 4000er as a subahdar in 1677. Unlike the present practice all governors of the same province did not always enjoy the same rank or salary. Promotion on first appointment was usual. The governor received a very extravagant salary, a little more generous even than the salaries of the most expensive governors in British India. Of course this varied with his rank. But usually, as in Gujarat, the governor had a personal allowance as well.

The Diwan

Next in importance came the diwan. He was a representative of the imperial Diwan and in independent charge of the revenues of the province. The revenue collected in the province was remitted to him. He received all the records of the collection, remissions, and arrears of land revenue from various parts of the province and sent them on to the imperial Diwan. He was responsible for the due collection, proper accounting and regular auditing of the revenue. His agents in various parts of the province realized sales tax, rahdari dues, octroi and whatever other taxes were levied by the emperor. All accounts of expenditure were also submitted to him. He was responsible for keeping them in proper form and for their audit. It was his duty to see that money was spent only by proper authorization, i.e. for purposes approved by the emperor or the imperial Diwan and to the extent of that approval only. He was thus a check on the provincial governor who did not possess the right of giving him any orders.

Still, however exalted his position in the province, the provincial diwan was usually a mansabdar of much lower status than the governor. The most favoured of them could only be a 1000er. There were diwans who were only 250ers. Usually most of the diwans were 400ers to 600ers.

As among the governors, the same province did not always have diwans of the same status. We hear of a diwan of Ajmer in 1694 who was a 250er but his predecessor in 1693 was a 400er. Basharat Khan, diwan of Delhi in 1692, was a 600er. Muhammod Zaman who occupied this office in 1694 was only a 400er.

Though the diwan drew a much smaller salary and enjoyed a less exalted status among the public servants, he did not acknowledge the provincial governor as his superior. Of course he attended the governor's court along with other officials. We sometimes hear of even a diwan being summoned to meet a new governor with his papers —as in Orissa. But the diwan kept himself aloof from the governor's politics. Sometimes the two quarrelled violently as under Jahangir in Bengal in 1616. When the governors sometimes rebelled, they were not usually able to carry their diwans with them in their rebellion—Murad failed to secure the support of the diwan of Gujarat, Khurram was left coldly alone by his diwans and had to take the treasure by force. During Aurangzeb's reign the pernicious custom of giving some favoured individuals multiple charges affected the independence of the diwans as well. We find Arshad Khan serving as a diwan and deputy governor of Kabul in 1695.

The Bakshi

The bakhshi was usually the second in rank to the governor. He filled the office of the provincial newswriter as well. As the bakhshi he was in charge of the military establishment stationed in the provnice. His officers held the yearly inspection of horses and review of soldiers according to the instructions received from the Mir Bakhshi. He thus issued warrants for payment to the mansabdars serving in the province. When an expedition was ordered the bakhshi saw to it that the various officers called upon to take part in it had the requisite number of men and horses under them. In consultation with the leader of the expedition, the bakhshi looked after the needs of the army and was represented by a bakhshi in the expedition as well. As the news-writer he reported to the emperor all that happened in the province, the amount of revenue collected, celebrated cases decided, the fortunes of expeditions, the progress of work in all the departments and any unusual happenings. The combination of these two offices made it possible to employ as a news-writer, an officer of sufficiently high rank who could report provincial matters without fear of the governor.

The Diwan-i-Bayutat

The Diwan-i-Bayutat was the representative of the Khan-i-Saman in the province. He looked after roads and buildings, supervised imperial stores and ran State workshops. He took charge of escheated properties. He looked to the comforts of the emperor when he was in the province.

Kotwal

The kotwal was not really a provincial officer, he was there at the provincial capital looking after its police arrangements just as several other kotwals did so in smaller cities. He collected information about bad characters, recorded all movements of citizens into and from the city, suppressed crime by punishing all those whom he arrested while in the act, ran the jail, and put down minor disturbances in the city. All the kotwals were under the subahdar.

Qazi

The offices of the provincial qazi and the sadr were sometimes united in one person. The provincial qazi stood at the head of all the qazis in the province; as the sadr he made recommendations to the imperial sadr for the proper distribution of royal charity. He thus became the royal instrument for patronizing learning, literature and piety. He dispensed justice, performed marriages among high personages of the province and acted as the registrar-general for the whole province.

Establishments

Every one of these heads of departments had a well-organized staff under a darogha (superintendent). The head was assisted by a personal assistant who usually acted as a reader, though some had separate readers as well. A recorder took down all the orders that were passed. When work was heavy, deputies were also appointed. Regular hours of work were prescribed. Well-observed conventions for the disposal of work were established and respected, provincial secretariat was a humming beehive of work.

The Sarkar

The sarkar was under the fojdar. He was the emperor's direct representative in the area under his command, working however under the supervision and guidance of the governor. He was usually a mansabdar of high rank, sometimes as high as a 4000er. As such he was appointed by the emperor by a royal Farman. He discharged the functions of the subahdar in his charge. He also worked as the kotwal of the rural areas which had no kotwal of their own.

The diwan was represented by the collector called karori or amil. He had a considerable staff to help him in his work. There were several kotwals in the sarkar stationed at the important towns of the district discharging police and other miscellaneous duties as described above. They were all under the fojdar. A qazi dispensed justice, and acted as the registrar and notary-public. A chief shiqdar and a chief munsif are also sometimes spoken of as forming the staff of the fojdar but they must have functioned only where regular qazis were not appointed. Many of the Mughal workshops were located in the headquarters of the sarkar under their own daroghas. Though they were responsible to the Khan-i-Saman for their technical side, the fojdar and the subahdar exercised general supervision over their work. A news-writer recorded all that happened in the sarkar and sent his report to the provincial news-writer for incorporation in his report.

The Parganah

The parganah was mainly a revenue unit. It had a tahsildar in charge of the collection of revenue. It was here that the land revenue was actually paid to the State. The muqaddams brought their collections to the parganah treasury. Sometimes the cultivators themselves paid the revenue into the treasury. The tahsildar was helped by a staff of clerks, one in charge of the treasury (the khazanchi), another keeping an account of the money realized from various sources, a third recording all arrears still due. One of the clerks kept the accounts in Hindi and probably examined the returns of the village muqaddams. Several sets of surveyors worked in the parganah at the time of harvest recording the cropped area in various villages. A shiqdar is also sometimes mentioned as a functionary; whether it is a Mughal parganah officer known by a pre-Mughal title or a separate officer still continuing functioning, it is difficult to decide. Some parganahs had a qazi. The choudhri and the qanungo were representatives of the community who were consulted by the revenue authorities in revenue matters. A parganah might have several choudhris but usually only one qanungo. The choudhris were hereditary officers who were usually remunerated by an additional cess collected by themselves from the cultivators.

The Village

The Mughals had no resident functionary of their own in the villages. The muqaddam was probably the sarpanch (president of the panchayat) known by this name for his revenue functions. He distributed the demand slips to and collected the land revenue from the cultivators. He was allowed 2½ per cent of the revenue as his fee. He was responsible for the due realization of the land revenue from the village; in case there was any delay in payment he was called to account. The patwari was the accountant maintained by the villagers at their own cost to keep account of the cropped area, the crops sown and the revenue due, demanded from and paid by cultivator. He seems to have kept a weather journal on which were based any claims for remission the cultivators might demand.

Some Safeguards

Thus the province was a well-organized unit of administration. Akbar had so organized its government as to avoid the danger of the disintegration of the State by its over-mighty subjects. The governmental authority was vested not in one person but in three, the subahdad, the diwan and the bakhshi. No one among them controlled the entire resources of the province. Only all the three of them acting in unison could create a dangerous situation. Besides this division of provincial authority, some provinces had independent thanadars in charge of places of strategic importance, others had independent collectors of customs. Sometimes independent commanders of expeditions were sent by the emperor to carry out military operations against an important rebel in the province or an independent chief in its neighbourhood.

The fojdars again were appointed directly by the emperor. They were entitled to make direct representations to him about affairs in their sarkar, though normally they did so through the subahdar. In every province there was at least one fojdar very near in rank to the governor and always hoping to have the governorship fall vacant in his lap. Such a fojdar usually made it has business to keep the emperor informed through his vakil at court of any nefarious designs of the governor. Thus successful rebellion in a province was rendered difficult as it could only come about by the united action of so many discordant elements.

The stationing of a news-writer in every province charged with the duty of keeping the emperor informed about all that was happening in it further helped to nip in the bud the evil designs of an ambitious governor. This was rendered possible by placing the bakhshi, an eminent mansadbar in his own right, at the head of the news-writers in the province. Without the conjunction of this office with mother, the chief news-writer in the province could neither have been an officer of high rank nor independent of the governor. Secret news-writers—khufia navis—unknown to public officials, were also appointed sometimes to give the emperor a better insight into the provincial affairs. The emperor was thus able to keep his finger on the pulse of the provincial affairs. The governors were not allowed to remain long in one province, seldom, if ever, for more than five years. Thus the people could not get accustomed to looking to a particular person only as the representative of the government in their midst. The emperors kept moving about from one place to another. Even the imperial capital was shifted from place to place. Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Fatehpur Sikri were thus honoured in turn by Akbar. Jahangir for several years of his reign kept moving between Delhi and Srinagar. Sometimes pleasure, at others business—military, diplomatic, or civil—kept the Mughal emperors on the run. Thus they would appear towering high above their governors, now in this province, now in that, and thus make a demand on the active loyalty of their subjects. When they were not present, the elaborate ceremony with which even their orders had to be received by the governors---meeting the royal messenger usually outside the city, holding a special court for the reception of the Farman, placing it on their head and doing it honour as if it were the emperor in person—made the governors look humble occasionally. The judicial functions of the emperor further kept the governors in their place. Imperial messengers were constantly on the run, now asking for a report on an official against whom a complaint had been lodged at the imperial court, now demanding the particulars of an affair between two private citizens. Imperial commissioners were sent to investigate on the spot complaints lodged at the imperial court. Capital punishment could only be inflicted with imperial approval.

No wonder then that the system devised by Akbar proved successful for about a century and a half. Under Aurangzeb several of the checks devised by Akbar's genius were withdrawn. Multiple governorships, combination of several offices, otherwise intended to be naturally exclusive, cessation of imperial tours in the north during the second half of the reign and the appointment of princes desirous of playing the emperor in miniature to most of the provinces, brought about a dangerous situation which, combined with other disintegrating factors, led to the downfall of the Mughal empire.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF SHER SHAH

Sher Shah left behind many traditions of his achievements. Even in the days of Akbar, the Mughal historians writing purposely for the imperial eye praised him and talked of his reign as a golden age. When we remember that he had founded his dynasty by expelling Akbar's father from India, we shall have to admit that these praises of his government cannot but be based on truth.

Central Government.

When Sher Shah came to the throne, he inherited the Pathan system of administration as modified by Babur and Humayun. Sher Shah introduced several changes of his own. The pivot of this system was the emperor himself. But even a Sher Shah could not do all the work of the State himself. He was served well by a band of secretaries who were heads of different departments. There were three civilian secretaries. The Vakil was the chief secretary who seems to have been in general charge of the secretariat establishment and probably dealt with such problems as were not definitely assigned to any other department. The Vazir was the financial secretary. He was in charge of the revenue department and looked after accounts and audit as well. The third department was mainly concerned with the correct drafting of imperial orders and may have looked after the records of the government. A military secretary helped the emperor in carrying out his military policy, particularly the question of assignments for salaries. These four secretaries completed the secular side of the State activities.[1] There was a Mir-i-Atish in immediate charge of the artillery. He may have occupied a status equal to that of the secretaries.

On the ecclesiastical side, Sher Shah continued unabated the high position of the Muslim theologians in the

State. The highest church dignitary was the Sadr who, besides dispensing royal charity, acted as the highest judicial officer under the emperor. The Sadr enjoyed great power as the spiritual guide of the monarch. As the recognized exponent of the Muslim law and tradition, he was the repository of the faith as much for the king as for his subjects. He was the only institution that could lawfully challenge the acts of the king. Sher Shah paid great respect to his Sadr and was even prepared to perform menial personal services for him in public. Priest-ridden as the pre-Akbar Muslim state in India was, the position of the Sadr cannot be exaggerated.

The Chief Qazi constituted the highest criminal court in the realm. Even the emperor could not override his interpretation of the law. The Quranic law and the Muslim tradition formed the criminal and public law of the land. The Qazi was its chief interpreter, and as long as he was in office his authority was unchallenged.

The chief Muhtsib was the religious censor on the one hand and supervisor of markets on the other. As censor he reported all transgressions of the Muslim law to the appropriate authorities and secured the observance of restrictions and restraints put upon the followers of other religions. He must have supervised the collection of the jizya.[2]

These nine officers formed the central government under the general supervision and control of the king. Sher Shah kept all the strings of government in his own hands. He had no ministers but was helped by secretaries. He had no governors as such and kept tight control over all that happended even in the most distant parts of his empire. He rose early, bathed and said his prayers. Early in the morning he started his day by giving audience to the secretaries and other great officials. Then he received the reports of his spies and reporters. This enabled him to issue his orders of the day before it was time again to say his prayers a second time. Then after breakfast would begin the ceremonious business of the day. The great nobles and famous army leaders would be first admitted to royal audience, after which the king would hold his court. There Sher Shah would dispense justice without fear or favour. No criminal howsoever high could shelter himself behind his rank and office. Later generations have handed down marvellous stories of his ingenuity and impartially.[3] It would be too much to believe all of them but the general impression cannot be resisted that Sher Shah had carved out a name for himself for even-handed justice. This would be followed by his holding a review of troops. His chroniclers would have us believe that he branded every horse himself.[4] This would have been obviously too much even for a Sher Shah. He may have occassionally supervised branding operations and thus secured due observance of his orders. This done, the treasury would claim his attention. The cash in hand in different Hakumats and the money remitted therefrom would be reported and commented upon. Then the accounts of the collectors of land revenue of crown lands would be looked into. The applicants for several high posts would then be examined and posted to their various jobs. After thus working for most of the time, Sher Shah would sleep and rest in order to be able to face another equally arduous day.[5]

This routine was interrupted by the frequent warfare in which Sher Shah passed his life. Humayun was defeated in the battle of Kanauj in May 1540. Sher Shah died on May 22, 1545. In these five years he packed the conquests of a lifetime. He captured Delhi in 1540, conquered the Punjab, defeated the Gakkhars, plotted to overthrow Mirza Haider in Kashmir, and hurried back to Bengal to put down rebellion in 1541. He conquered Malwa and threatened Jodhpur in 1542. In 1543 he conquered Raisin and built New Delhi. The year 1544 saw the conquest of Jodhpur, Chitor and Ajmer. The whole of the year 1545 to his death was spent in the siege of Kalinjar. All these expeditions claimed his personal attention and it is difficult to imagine his being able to devote as much attention to the details of administration as his daily time-table shows. What seems to have happened is that

Sher Shah succeeded in infusing his spirit in the routine work of the administration which was carried on as usual by the secretariat officials at the headquarters.

There was one task, however, which the emperor alone could perform. There were no scales of pay, and there was no system of examination for public services. Naturally all appointments were made by the emperor. He fixed the salary of every candidate for office.[6] We are told that officers were transferred every third year with a view to give every one of them equal opportunities for making money.[7] But as his reign did not extend beyond five years and as the larger part of the country was annexed during the last three years it is difficult to be sure that this rule had much chance of being applied in practice.

'Provincial' Administration

As we have already seen, Sher Shah did not favour devolution of authority. Thus the empire was not divided into provinces except in Bengal. Forty-seven garrison towns were made the seats of military commanders who kept the surrounding country in awe by their show of military force.[8] For fiscal purposes the country was divided into parganahs and though the parganahs were grouped together into larger units, these never became real units of administration. They resembled the modern divisions under commissioners in mostly acting as official channels of communication—and that not always—between the local authorities in the parganah and the imperial secretariat.[9] Sher Shah tried for some time to keep Bengal as an independant administrative unit. But he soon discovered that this let loose disruptive tendencies reminding the local officials of the once independent kingdom of Bengal. It was therefore sub-divided and though an official was given charge of the province as a whole, care was taken by appointing a theologian, Qazi Fasih, to see that such disruptive tendencies did not occur again.[10] The most famous of his commander-governors was Khwas Khan who was posted on the north-west frontier at Rohtas.

The Post and Communications

The absence of any effective intermediaries between the king and his officers in the parganah rendered a development of the postal system necessary. He did not introduce the system on his own. He improved upon the existing machinery. Every hakim, leader of expedition, or collector of land revenue was expected to keep the emperor daily posted about important administrative and military problems. The postal runners used all means of conveyance and wonderful stories have been told of their long and swift journeys.[11] Thus whatever happened and wherever it happened was at once reported to the emperor. No commander could present the emperor with an accomplished fact leaving him with no option but to follow his official's lead. No leader of expedition could keep the emperor in the dark about his difficulties and then leave his work undone and slink away. Besides these despatches sent by his own officials, Sher Shah seems to have employed secret agents as well who kept him informed of what was happening in and around his dominions. The rebellious designs of his governor of Bengal were at once reported to him to enable him to nip the evil in the bud. Humayun's negotiations with Maldev at once found an echo at Sher Shah's court and he was able to scotch the planned combination of the Rathors and the Mughals. When Shajat Khan in Malwa misappropriated the lands meant for his soldiers to his own use, Sher Shah learnt of it without much delay. Thus the postal arrangements and the spy system enabled Sher Shah to face his difficulties before they became insurmountable.

The spy system and postal arrangements depended for their success on efficient means of communication. Sher Shah paid full heed to this aspect of the problem. In the Roman empire all roads led to Rome, under Sher Shah all roads converged at Agra. The Grand Trunk Road led from Agra to Rohtas on one side and to the extremities of Bengal on the other, thus traversing some 1500 *koses*. Another road led from Agra to Burhanpur outside Suri dominions. Jodhpur and Agra were connected through

Ajmer by a third. The road between Agra and Delhi was made safer and more convenient. The only road outside the Agra system was the one connecting Lahore and Multan. Pillars indicated the distance travelled. Fruit trees are said to have been planted on both sides of the roads and vegetable gardens seem to have been set up at least in the vicinity of post-houses. He had intended to transfer the population on both the sides of the road between Lahore and the frontier elsewhere and set up villages of Afghans in order to safeguard the road against future Mughal invzasions. He had, however, no time for putting this into practice.[12]

Post-houses at every stage formed another remarkable feature of the system. Here two horses were always kept ready to be placed at the disposal of any postal messenger carrying the royal post. Seventeen hundred serais all over the Suri dominions are said to have served the weary travellers. Here a manager looked after the whole establishment which included a royal rest-house, a mosque with a caller to prayers and a copy of the *Quran* for the religiously minded, separate resting places for the Hindu and Muslim travellers, free kitchens for the Hindu and the Muslim poor, and Hindu and Muslim cooks at the service of those who wanted to avail themselves thereof. A porter looked after the weary travellers when they slept.[13] He closed the doors of the serai at prescribed hours every evening. When the morning came, he roused them and requested them to look after their belongings and when every one had been satisfied that everything was safe, he opened the doors. It is doubtful how far the Hindus availed themselves of the free royal kitches that are said to have been a part of the system. Nor is it possible to ascertain how far the services of the Hindu cooks were utilized. The rigid caste system must have made any frequent use of these two institutions very improbable. They seem to have been meant probably for the convenience of the postal messengers many of whom must have been Hindus. The free kitchens formed a part of the royal charities. Foddar for the horses and carts for the travellers were also procurable at least at the better of these establishments and a weary traveller could always look with pleasant anticipation to the end of his day's journey. The land revenue of the surrounding territory was assignel for the maintenance of the serais.

It is customary to credit Sher Shah with the construction of all these roads. Government, much less civilized existence, would have been impossible without some sort of roads in mediaeval India. Babur had planned a road from Agra to Kabul with mile posts at every mile, towers every 9 miles, and post-houses every eighteen miles. In Babur's scheme these were to be maintained by the state if situated in crownlands and by the jagirdars if in the jagirdar's lands.[14] Babur must have carried out a part of his programme. Sidi Ali Rais travelling earlier in Humayun's reign had complained of lack of ferries and bridges on the roads.[15] The road to Burhanpur could not have been all made by Sher Shah as part of it passed outside his territories. It is thus doubtful whether all the roads that Sher Shah has been credited with building were really built by him. Seventeen hundred serias two *koses* apart would have covered a distance of about 3400 *koses* or 6800 miles. Their maintenance would have cost the state a very large amount. Serais two *koses* apart would have been an unjustifiable luxury and no account of later times bears out their existence at such a short distances.[16]

Making allowance for all kinds of exaggeration, it seems clear that if Sher Shah over-centralized administration, he took adequate measures for the purpose of meeting some of its dangers. The postal system, the existence of secret agents, the efficient means of communication and the foundation of these serais-*cum*-post-houses served the purpose of minimizing some of the dangers born of this centralization.

It is necessary to remember that we need not look for modern postal organization in Sher Shah's reign. His postal agency was exclusively for the purpose of serving the ends of the state. It served no other customer except the emperor. As we find later on under the Mughals, even the officials could not use it for any but imperial purposes.

The Revenue System

Sher Shah's fame rests chiefly on his revenue system. Unfortunately, contemporary accounts of Abbas and Nizam-ud-Din do not contain any very lucid description of the system. We have, however a rather wordy description of the method which Sher Shah followed as an agent of his father who was a jagirdar under the Lodhis. There are stray references to Sher Shah's practices in the *Ain* as well. Piecing them together it is possible to form some estimate of the results obtained though less practicable to understand his actual administrative practices. That Sher Shah's assessment was just and formed an ideal towards which Akbar's officers were striving is a striking testimony to Sher Shah's handiwork.[17] But we have to remember that even William the Conqueror claimed to rule with the help of the laws of Edward the Confessor. The *Ain-i-Akbari's* praise of Sher Shah's achievement, may therefore, be as much an apology for new methods adopted by Akbar as was the statement of William's chroniclers. The *Ain* tells us that Sher Shah took a step in advance of the existing practices by introducing measurement in place of sharing the crop.[18] We have it on the authority of Abbas that the muqaddam collected one-third of the produce (for the State) and left two-thirds to the cultivator.[19] This is all that we have been specifically told by Sher Shah's historians about his revenue system.

This needs elucidation. To begin with, just as one cannot talk of one system of revenue assessment today, similarly it is difficult to talk of one system prevailing all over the country under Sher Shah. A *Dastur-ul-Amal* of the seventeenth century describes six systems of land revenue assessment prevailing in Mughal India.[20] In Sindh the system of sharing the crop prevailed even when the *Ain* was compiled. For the Kumaon division of the Mughal province of Delhi no figures of land revenue assessment are available in the *Ain*. When Multan was newly conquered Sher Shah made special provisions for the assessment of land revenue therein[21] No complete measurement and survey of all lands under cultivation had been found possible in Jodhpur and Udaipur till recently and it would be unreasonable to expect complete survey of land in these areas under Sher Shah. Thus the first thing that we have to remember is the absence of a uniform system all over the empire.

But just as we can speak of zabti as the main system of land revenue assessment under Akbar, we can talk of a system of land revenue assessment based on measurement as the main system prevalent or aimed at in Sher Shah's time. This made necessary the survey, measurement and record of the holdings of the cultivators. The unit of measurement was the yard of Sikandar Lodhi, 32 digits long. Sixty yards made a jarib and 3600 square yards a bigha. Land was measured with a rope. This must have created some difficulties in practice. A rope loose and a rope stretched are different measures. Ends could get frayed.

At the time of the seasonal survey of cultivation the extent of land under different crops in possession of cultivators was recorded. To the cropped area thus recorded, the Schedule of Demand given is the *Ain* was applied in order to fix the demand of the State. This schedule shows the State demand in kind per bigha of different crops. Thus when the area under cultivation and the crops cultivated had been ascertained, it was easy to estimate the demand of the State in kind.

But the Schedule of Demand raises some fundamental questions. How was it arrived at? When was it introduced? Did the State collect the revenue in kind or was any attempt made to convert it into cash? Some information is available on some of these questions but it is tantalizingly inadequate. We are told that the Schedule of Demands represented one-third of the average produce of three kinds of lands. The whole process has been described in the *Ain*. Land, we are told, was divided into three classes, good, middling and bad. The produce of a bigha of each kind of land under different crops was estimated and an average was struck.[22] We have been left absolutely in the dark as to the areas selected for the purpose of striking this average of produce. Good, middling, and bad lands would certainly differ in their yields in different parts of the country. What may have been regarded as good land in Delhi, may have been regarded only as middling land in Agra or *vice versa*. Thus when land in any particular area—most probably somewhere near the capital—was chosen for the purpose of fixing the average produce of each bigha, a highly speculative operation was performed. But when was this done? No specific answer to this question is available but it must have been some time in the year 1541. Now the crop of the year 1541 need not have been a normal one in that particular area. Thus when the average produce of a single year in a single selected area was made the basis of this estimate of the produce and with it that of the state demand in kind, two very speculative operations took place in this attempt at fixing the land revenue. It seems that the schedule adopted was a permanent one. It could have been introduced at the earliest in 1541 in such areas as had been conquered by then and in other areas on their conquest. Those who have some acquaitance with the work and time involved in the revenue settlement operation even under modern conditions can well understand that it would have been impossible to have introduced this system in the areas conquered towards the end of the year 1543 and thereafter.

We know nothing at all about conversion to cash of this demand in kind. Of course the king could have very well received all the land revenue in kind, stored it and by moving from one place to another consumed it. But the needs of the state had to be met in cash as well and some method of converting a part of this demand in cash must have been current. As there is no other information available on the question, it is reasonable to suppose that conversions, if any, must have taken place at the current market rates.

To sum up, the normal system aimed at by Sher Shah settled the land revenue with the cultivators direct. The state demanded one-third of the estimated produce. The demand was usually in kind but payment could have been made in cash as well, at rates prevailing in the local market. The state demand varied with the area under actual cultivation and the crops cultivated. The demand per bigha of different crops seems to have been settled early in his reign. The estimate of produce of each bigha under different crops was arrived at by taking the average of the actual produce of a bigha of three classes of land of varying fertility in some specially selected area probably near the capital. It must have been speculative and with it the demand resting thereon as well.

The system, however, did not prevail all over the Suri dominions. Rajputana must have continued the system of sharing the actual produce and so must have Multan where land was not measured and one-fourth of the produce was taken as the land revenue.[23] Certain parts of Bengal as well that remained un-measured even in Akbar's days could have hardly been measured in Sher Shah's time.

Jagirs

It is customary to assert that Sher Shah did away with the zamindars and therefore with the jagirdars as well. But the two terms are not synonymous now nor were they synonymous then. Zamindars meant Rajas or overlords of different areas claiming some rights over the cultivators. If Sher Shah extended the system that he had tried in his own jagir in the Lodhi times to his whole empire this would have left the jagirs intact. Large tracts in the Suri dominions are known to have been given in jagir to the officials, civil and military. Khwas Khan held one-tenth of the whole land. Haji Khan, Shujat Khan and other great commanders held extensive jagirs.[24] The usual method of making payment to the leaders of different garrison commands was that of giving them lands as jagirs within their own commands. The settlement of land revenue in the jagir lands must have followed one of the several practices prevailing in different parts of India. Sharing of the produce was the normal method of payment of land revenue before Sher Shah changed it and it is likely that it continued unaffected in the jagir lands. The jagirdars were interested in keeping out the officials of the state and the cultivators were averse to adopting new methods of making payments. Naturally division of produce continued in the jagirs. The same is true of lands granted to scholars and theologians for their maintenance.

Collection of Land Revenue

Unfortunately all our authorities are silent about the methods of collection of land revenue under Sher Shah. The information that Abbas gives about the method of collection followed by Sher Shah when he was the agent of a jagirdar, has been usually used to fill in this picture. The cultivator was given a demand slip presumably in the local vernacular setting out the state's claim. Now this must have ordinarily referred to the demand in kind unless the cultivator had previously agreed to pay in cash at a rate of conversion agreed upon. He paid not only the land revenue but certain additional cesses as well. Thus a measurement fee had to be paid. The actual collector of the land revenue, the muqaddam—the village headman—got his percentage and the land revenue officials visiting the village boarded at the expense of the villagers. Of course these were old customary dues. Sher Shah claims to have fixed their amount only.[25] Sher Shah threw upon the village headman the responsibility of collecting the land revenue. He was expected to execute a bond and furnish securities for the due discharge of his duties.[26] The muqaddam gave a receipt to the cultivator. The revenue demand was rigorously enforced. If a cultivator failed to pay, probably the usual methods of extorting the money from him were resorted to. He was imprisoned and tortured till he managed to pay the requisite amount in kind or cash.

The cultivators were granted some remission in case of damage to crops. Compensation was paid to the cultivators for the trampling of standing crops under the feet of soldiers on march or encamping.[27] All care was taken to minimize the damage done but in case this was not successful compensation was paid for the loss sustained.

Unlike the present practice, the revenue received by the state depended upon the area under cultivation and the crops cultivated. Thus an extension of cropped area immediately brought in a larger amount of revenue. So did the introduction of better crops. Self-interest led the state to adopt various measures for the purpose of encouraging agriculture. Only one of these measures. the grant of advances to the cultivators, finds a mention in the contemporary records. These advances bore no interest which was forbidden by the Muslim law. If we are to judge from later Mughal practices they were to be returned within a year.

The rights of the cultivators in the land were well recognized. The land under cultivation was theirs. They could sell it, mortgage it and give it as a bequest. It was inheritable. The rights of the state were confined to the demand for land revenue alone. Unoccupied, unclaimed or barren land belonged either to the village community or to the state. The cultivators had certain common rights therein but if a cultivator offered to break new land, the state that stood to gain thereby an increased land revenue, secured the new comer a peaceful entry upon his newly acquired right.[28] In the subsistence economy of the day there were not many competitors for new land.

In certain parts of the country, however, there seems to have been in existence a class of persons enjoying—lawfully or otherwise—certain rights in the land. They were farmers of land revenues and could be easily dislodged as Sher Shah proved in his own jagirs.[29]

For carrying out the work of revenue assessment and collection successfully Sher Shah employed a large number of revenue officials. In villages—there were some 1,16,000 of them in all—the muqaddam collected the land revenue and the patwari supervised the work of assessment on behalf of the villagers. He kept the records of seasonal cultivation, the crops cultivated, and the area under cultivation. In the parganah, the shiqdar performed the duties of the muqaddam in generally supervising the work of collection and the qanungo was the patwari writ large. The state maintained Hindi-knowing clerks for the purpose of preparing writs of demands to be supplied to the cultivators every season. They also issued receipts to the cultivators. They Persian knowing clerks prepared the Persian set of papers to be transmitted to the emperor. The treasurer and the store-keeper received the revenue collected and were responsible for transmitting it to the emperor. At the head of the revenue establishment stood the Amin supervising everything and directing all operation.[30] The collection of land revenue was always a troublesome task and the Amin had to call upon his police and military colleagues for helping him occasionally in order to collect land revenue from a refractory village.

The work of these revenue officials was not as simple as that of their modern successors. They had not only to collect the land revenue but to assess it afresh every season. The principles of assessment had been settled, but as the actual demand depended upon the cropped area and the crops cultivated, it had to be assessed every time. Of course the Indian cultivator was as conservative then as now. Usually the fields would be brought under cultivation and almost the same crops sown in regular rotation. Still there were certain crops which took more than a season to mature, e.g. cotton and sugarcane. The vegetables as well presented similar problems. Thus the revenue officials had to record the season's crops and the area and then assess the land revenue.

Other Sources of Revenue

There were several other sources of income besides the land revenue. The customs levied on imports into the kingdom must have provided a considerable sum of money. Sher Shah is said to have forbidden the realization of any transit duties or octroi. But it is doubtful how far this prohibiton became effective. Sher Shah's government was cut up into so many jagirs that it is doubtful whether the jagirdars gave up this lucrative sources of income. We know that in the palmiest days of the Mughal empire Aurangzeb could not enforce the remission of several duties which he considered unlawful. The trouble lay in the custom that when a jagir was assigned all sorts of local taxes might have been taken into account in estimating the income to be derived there from. Unless the jagirdar was compensated for by an additional grant, he felt himself justified in levying traditional taxes even if they were prohibited. The prohibition may have been enforced in the crown-lands. A sale tax was realized after an article had been sold. The tax included even the smallest articles of daily use. Sale of property also brought in some money to the State. Some money was also collected as the ground rent from the vendors in the markets for the stalls they occupied. An excise tax on the manufacture of sugar was regulated by the number of the iron cauldrons in which molasses were converted into sugar. A ferry tax was collected from those who used the boats for crossing rivers. A grazing tax, variously assessed, seems to have been levied. A profession tax was collected from artificers, butchers, sugarcane crushers, cotton dressers, thatchers, cloth printers, fishers, sawers, manufacturers of lime and of intoxicating liquors, dyers, tanners, and several other classes of artisans. A cattle tax was also imposed. Manufacture of hemp and blankets was taxed. Forced labour was another source of revenue. It is likely that the state was the reversionary of all the property of persons who died without heirs. Working of the mines and the exploitation of certain monopolies must have brought in a pretty sum. Besides the jizya, the Hindus paid a pilgrimage tax as well. Some amusewents were also taxed, e.g. gambling."[31]

This list makes an interesting document. Most of the taxes were paid by the masses and the middle class. The Government officials seem to have been exempt from the payment of taxes except what they paid as presents, offerings and investiture money. The traders who formed the middle classes paid the various sorts of taxes but it is more than probable that they shifted a part of their burden to the consumers. On their own incomes they paid not much except what was levied by the state for stamping their weights and measures or what they paid as ground rent if they happened to occupy stalls in public markets. Of course the payment of the customs, the demand of transit dues, the realization of the sales tax from them must have made it necessary for them to 'please' the officials many times over.

Judicial fines have sometimes been reckoned as forming a source of income in India in the sixteenth century. Fines were mostly paid to the aggrieved parties, except when they were realized from the defaulters in state demands in which case they should be accounted for as the cost of collection.

Not all this money was, however, paid into the state treasury. The larger part of the land revenue was set apart for the payment of military commanders and their commands. Cash salaries were very uncommon and most of the public servants were paid by the assignment of land revenue and other local taxes in areas assigned to them. Mines and monopolies seem to have been farmed rather than directly exploited. The income was mostly spent for the personal expenses of the emperor, the cost of military expeditions, the building of new cities and the raising of new forts, the construction and maintenance of roads and serais, the payment to state spies, clerks, and secretaries and such other public servants as did not receive jagirs. Costly displays, public festivities and marriages of the king's sons and daughters must also have been responsible for spending some more of the state's money. The scholars, the theologians, Muslim judicial officers and saints also received public endowments in the form of jagirs and so did probably most of the officers attached to the offices of the Sadr, the Muhtsib, and the Qazi.

Justice

Administration of justice under Sher Shah was even-handed. The Amin heard suits about rights in land. The Mir-i-Adal and the Qazi disposed of other cases, mostly criminal.[32] They decided them accoring to the Muslim law. Naturally only cases between Muslims would be brought before them or such criminal cases in which the state was a party—cases involving blasphemy, heresy, sacrilege, and apostasy. Several parganahs had a Munsif-i-Munsifan, the chief judge who heard civil cases. The shiqdar in the parganah and the Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran in the higher unit, which later came to be called sarkar, were executive officers and as such performed preventive duties. But it is possible that some cases might have been brought before them by way of complaint against the judicial officers. At the capital sat the Chief Qazi, the imperial Sadr and above them all the emperor.[33] Of course appeals in the modern sense of the term were unknown. But cases could travel to the emperor's court through various stages as complaints against officials. At present an appeal implies the incapacity of the lower court in fact-finding or correctly interpreting the law. In mediaeval times it involved unwillingness to do justice. Sher Shah had a reputation for justice which must have kept many of his judicial officers straight. He left behind him many stories illustrating both his zeal for being just and his capacity for arriving at the truth.

But the imperial machinery for administering justice only touched the fringe of the problem. For the huge majority of the Hindus, their caste or village panchayats ordinarily served as the judicial bodies. Here the Hindu law and the customary law were applied and as the aggrieved party could take the case to the public courts, the panchayats usually functioned as just tribunals for fear of getting their powers invaded.[34]

We have to remember that there could not have been so much litigation then nor so lengthy a process of deciding cases as we find in India today. The panchayats decided the cases from their own knowledge of the facts.

They were not concerned with the modern problem—whether the plaintiff or the complainant had proved his case. They decided a more vital issue, truth of the matter in dispute. Religion served as a great helper in keeping down litigation. An oath could easily prove or disprove a case; false swearing carried religious penalties of which people were terribly afraid.

Sher Shah paid a good deal of attention to the prevention of crime. He reverted to the old Hindu custom of enforcing liability for keeping peace on the localities. Whenever a theft occurred or a crime was committed, the locality had either to apprehend the criminal or make good the loss. Various stories have been preserved to prove how strict Sher Shah was in enforcnig this liability. He gained his end. Travel became safe and crimes of violence rare.[35]

We have only a glimpse here and there of the Criminal Code. Theft was punished with the death penalty.[36] Criminals sentenced for life were sent to Piyashori,[37] one kos from Gaur, where they died of brackish water. Certain places were recognized as sanctuaries wherefrom offenders could not be apprehended.[38] Naturally in the Qazris' courts the Muslim law was applied. The Panchayats enforced the customary law.

Religious Policy

Sher Shah's religious policy remained narrow. The jizya was collected from the Hindus. All classes paid it including the Brahmans. The helpless, the disabled, the women, the children and the propertyless classes were exempted from payment. A lump sum was fixed as the demand for jizya dividing the payers into three classes. It bore no relation to income but varied with the property possessed. Those who had property worth above 1,05,000 *dirhams* paid 48 *dirhams*. The second class consisted of those whose property was worth from Rs. 52 to Rs. 2,500. They paid Rs. 6¼ a year. The poorest class consisting of persons worth at least Rs. 52 was hit hardest as it had to pay annually Rs. 1⅕[39]

Sher Shah followed in the footsteps of his predecessors and proclaimed the victory of the Muslim arms over the Hindus by converting temples into mosques in the territories conquered. The temple in the fort at Jodhpur was thus converted.

His attitude towards the Hindus is best illustrated by his treatment of Puran Mal of Raisen. The expedition itself was inspired by religious motives and Sher Shah seems to have vowed vengeance on Puran Mal's head. When Puran Mal surrendered, he was allowed to leave the fort in safety. While he was peacefully encamping near the fort, Sher Shah's soldiers fell upon him. The Rajputs, though tricked and taken unawares, fought to the last and all died fighting. Sher Shah's treatment of Puran Mal does not differ basically from his treatment of Humayun. But even his Muslim chroniclers felt the need for justifying it. Two versions have been handed down to us. One makes Sher Shah an instrument of theologians who gave out as their opinion that word given to an infidel need not be kept. We are told, however, that Sher Shah asked for their opinions and was not thus an anwilling agent. The second version declares that Sher Shah was moved by the complaints of the Muslim women alleged to have been confined in the fort. Here again it is difficult for us to accept the story as Sher Shah had stipulated with Puran Mal that he would allow him to go unmolested only if there were no Muslim women confined in the fort. That Puran Mal was allowed to leave the fort proves that there were no women prisoners in the fort. We are left with one alternative alone, to accept the version as given in *Tarikh-i-Daudi* which makes it an act of calculated treachery.[10] Nor need we be surprised at that. Guile was Sher Shah's strong point and he never struck a straight blow where he could gain his end otherwise. It was in keeping with his tactics against Humayun as well as Maldev.

As a good Muslim, Sher Shah made large grants for charitable purposes. He is said to have spent 500 tolchas of gold daily through his qazis and mirs-i-adal. Subsistence grants to scholars and theologians were also made.

But Sher Shah distrusted the theologians so much that he would not hand over the royal Farmna making a grant to a scholar for fear that he might tamper with it. The recipient was told that it would be sent through the royal post and he would get it locally through the royal officials."

Sher Shah's Achievements

Sher Shah assured a prosperous trade in the country by the measures he took for the purpose of maintaining law and order. His improved means of communication further made transport cheaper and less inconvenient. The serais assured the merchants safe places for the deposit of their goods while in transit. To encourage commerce still further he abolished the vexatious transit duties charged as commerce passed from city to city.[41] Customs dues were to be paid at the frontiers, taxes on sales were collected when an article had been actually sold. To help trade and industry and encourage sales he reformed the coinage.[42] A standard weight and uniform fineness were adopted for all coins issued so that these could be easily accepted without any fear of any discount being charged later on. Gold, silver and copper coins were issued from various mint towns. They were bilingual, Hindi sharing with the Arabic script the honour of being included in the inscriptions.

Sher Shah was a great builder. He founded Sher Shah's Delhi and built forts at Rohtas on the Indus, at Patna, Sher Kot and Meher Kundal. To commemorate his victory over Humayun he demolished Kanauj and built a new city in its place.[43] He also built Rasulpur by moving the city of Shamsabad thereto.[44]

The peace and order that Sher Shah gave the country depended on the existence of a strong army. Sher Shah kept a large army including 1,50,000 horse, 300 elephants, 20,000 bowmen, and artillery under his own command. Besides this, spread over some fifty garrison towns another force 1,13,000 strong was maintained.[45]

These 2,83,000 soldiers did not represent a miscellaneous collection indifferently mounted, oddly clad and ill at ease in a moment of crisis. Sher Shah, founder of a new dynasty that he was, took great pains in keeping an effective military organization together. Horses were branded so that only useful horses could be brought to the field.[46] Though we are asked to believe that all soldiers were personally recruited by him,[47] it is improbable that Sher Shah was able so to reproduce himself as to be present at the time of the recruitment of soldiers in all parts of the country under all the fifty commanders. Of course he must have fixed the salaries of all those who were recruited to serve in his own standing army.[48] Outside, the soldiers were paid and maintained by the great nobles out of the income of the jagirs granted to them and their contingents. Branding horses was occasionally excused to favoured captains.[49] Sher Shah, it is asserted, changed the duties of the soldiers frequently, sent the members of his personal army on spells of garrison duty and ordered the garrisons to come and serve as his personal army. It is difficult to say, however, with any certainty how for these plans of his were ever put into practice on account of his short reign. The soldiers are said to have been all paid in his presence.[50] This can, hopever, refer to only such soldiers as were present at the capital or accompanied him in his expeditions.

Sher Shah always insisted on his great commanders keeping their own place. He would not allow them even to marry according to their own ambition.[51] He ruthlessly put down those who tried to assume royal airs even to the extent of sitting on a raised platform.[52]

Sher Shah assured peace in the country. His strong government succeeded in keeping law and order with the help of his efficient army, improved means of communication and an excellent system of keeping in touch with even the outskirts of his empire through his secret agents and daily official reports. His insistence on local responsibility for tracing crime made it rarer. His personal attention to business saved the country from the evils both of over-strict government and imperial neglect. His land revenue system took the earlier experiments in this direction a step further and made possible the evolution of Akbar's more systematized plan of assessment and collection. His currency reform encouraged trade and industry and assured easier sale of commodities. The abolition of petty transit duties at frequent intervals made it possible for the merchants to embark on extensive trade operations with an easy mind in the assurance that the things they bought would only cost to them what they paid to the sellers.

This is a creditable record for any ruler and much more for a ruler of the times in which Sher Shah lived. His even-handed justice, his strong government, and his efficient administration of the land revenue department all assure for him a place of honour among the rulers of India. Of course he was not writing on an entirely clean slate. Much of the administrative system in its details can be traced to some of his predecessors, particularly to Ala-ud-Din Khilji and Sikandar Lodhi. He was, however, free from the former's vanity and the latter's religious bigotry. He used whatever he found best in the earlier traditions of government in this country and moulded it to his own advantage according to his own lights.

This is much more than can be said of many great rulers of mankind. But as if it was not enough, extravagant claims have been made on his behalf. He has been called a nation builder.[53] The idea of a nation state had not yet taken root even in Europe; to apply it to the India of Sher Shah is unjust both to his times and himself. A ruler who went on leying the jizya, who did not think it necessary to keep faith with a Hindu chief and who proclaimed his victories by converting a temple into a mosque had yet to learn the elementary principles of a secular State. The zeal of his biographer seems to have outrun his discretion when in order to justify Sher Shah he falls foul of Akbar's attempts at secularizing the State[54] That Sher Shah followed the beaten path in his religious policy only proves that he had his limitations.

Attempts have been made frequently to institute comparisons between Akbar and Sher Shah. Here we are concerned only with evaluating their administrative systems. Akbar's greatest contribution to the history of India—nay of the world—is that he secularized the state at a time when rival religious sects were fighting among themselves. This was beyond Sher Shah's ken. Akbar of course added to the efficiency of the administrative machinery by his improved system of land revenue assessment, by instituting provincial governments, by the organization of the mansabdars and by resorting to cash payments in place of the usual jagirs. That Akbar built his land revenue system on Sher Shah's foundations and that he kept the system of branding horses must be admitted. But these were not entirely Sher Shah's own contributions to the administrative system. Others before him had used them. His original contribution was the introduction, in some parts of the country, of the system of land revenue assessment by measurement rather than by division of the crops. The land revenue was assessed still in kind. Akbar's schedule of per bigha rates of land revenue for different crops in cash formed as great a step in advance of Sher Shah's system as Sher Shah's measurement was on the previous system of division.

Considering everything, it will have to be admitted that Sher Shah gave India a strong and just government. This is high praise for any ruler but all the more creditable to one who was a great soldier, a successful tactician, an inspiring leader of men and a great conqueror.

NOTES

1. High officials, Vakil and Vazir are referred to by Abbas as functioning under Sher Shah, of *Qunun-i-Humayuni* for the organization of government.

2. Firistha, 356 refers to the sadr and the muhtsib discharging their various duties under Salim Shah. Daudi 204 refers to Qazis under Sher Shah.

3. Sujain Rai, 322.

4. Daudi (MS), 190; Abbas, (MS), 144; Mushtaqi (in E. and D., V, 550) mentions inspectors of branding.

5. Abbas, (MS), 141, 142; Daudi (MS), 189—192
6. Daudi, (MS), 192.
7. Abbas, (MS), 146.

8. *Akbar Nama* I, 196, Daudi (MS) 193; Abbas (MS), 146-7, the following garrison towns have been mentioned:—

Rahtas, Dipalpur, Multan, Malot, Delhi, Sambhal, Qanoj, Gawalior, Biana, Ranthambore, Chittor, Mandu, Raisen, Chunar, Dhandhera, Jodhpur, Ajmer, Nagore, Lucknow, Kalpi and Bajwara. All of them were seats of administrations as well.

9. Daudi (MS), 192
10. Abbas (MS), 121-122
11. Ibid, 155-156
12. Ibid, 149-150; Daudi (MS), 187 to 189
13. Ibid.
14. *Babur Nama,* 413
15. Vembery, 69

16. We are told by Firishta that Salim Shah added 17 more serais. In 990 A.H. Akbar gave orders for some more serais to be built. *Akbar Nama,* III, 300

17. Ain, I, 297
18. *Ain,* I, 347; *Akbar Nama,* II, 117, 282, 381, 404. 457
19. Abbas (MS), 145
20. *Dastur-ul-Amal* (MS), fb, 32b to 35a
21. Abbas (MS); 129—130
22. Ain, I
23. Abbas, (MS), 129—130
24. Abbas, (MS), 131, 142, 147, 148
25. Abbas, (MS), 17, 147
26. Ibid
27. Abbas, (MS), 152, 153

28. This is based on a contemporary document of the Mughal period. No original authority of Sher Shah's reign mentions such a trifling matter.

29. Abbas, (MS), 18,20
30. Ibid, 12—18, 146
31. *Akbar Nama,* 111, 393, 119
32. Daudi (MS), 204
33. Abbas (MS), 145—146
34. *Janam Sakhi, Trump,* 4.
35. Abbas (MS), 151—152
36. Elliot, IV, 421
37. Ain, II, 123
38. Elliot, IV, 385
39. Cf above

40. *Tarilkh-i-Daudi* (MS), 228 to 238; Ahmad Yodgar (MS), 75, 83a to 85a. The story as told by Abbas is too confusing to be credible.

41. Sher Shah remmed several grants of his predecessors and issued new orders for those that were continued, Abbas (MS), 54; Daudi (MS), 187; Mushtaqi in Elliot, V, 349.

42. *Elliot, IV,* 421

43. Wright. *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian museum,* Calcutta, 84 to 109.

44. Abbas, 150.
45. Badayuni, I, 427
46. Abbas, 146
47. Ibid, 144
48. Daudi, 192
49. Ibid
50. Abbas, 138
51. Daudi, 186
52. Abbas, 121, 122
53. Qanungo, (First Edition) 421.
54. Qanungo, (First Edition), 421 to 424.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEGACY OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

The Mughal dynasty came to an end as an imperial power by about 1720. It still had prestige enough to make it worth while for its successor States to claim authority on its behalf. The Marathas levied Chauth and Sardeshmukhi by virtue of an imperial order; the new rulers of Oudh, Bengal, Hyderabad and Karnatak continued calling themselves Nawab Vazir, Nawab, or Nizam—positions which their founders had occupied in the Mughal administration. The East India Company in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa claimed to derive its *divani* powers from an imperial order whereas it exercised the rest of its sovereign powers as much by authorization from British Parliament as by descent from the last Nawab of Bengal. In 1761 the Marathas fought the Afghans at Panipat ostensibly on behalf of a Mughal Emperor. The Hindu Rajahs of the extreme south, the Sikhs in the Punjab and the Rajputs in Rajputana alone disdained to claim any Mughal authority for the exercise of power in their respective areas.

Though the empire was as dead as mutton, it provided a convenient cloak for new authority. When the 'Emperors' lay under 'protective house arrest' under the Rohilas, Marathas, or the English, the gaolers of the emperors played at imperial authority. It was but a convenient fiction which always gracefully yielded to greater force, the Rohilas yeilding to the Marathas who in their turn bowed to the English. The East India Company recognized the authority of the Mughal 'emperor' in Delhi and its environs in 1803 and subordinated it to the supervision of a British 'resident' in the twenties. The 'mutineers' of the 'Bengal' army in 1857 rallied to Delhi and sought to legitimatize their rising by affecting to act for an effete Mughal emperor.

But the empire had been a reality for more than a century and a half. During this period, as we have seen, it was not always content to tread the beaten path; here it sought a way to reach its objectives, there it made one, if necessary. It gathered the administrative and royal traditions of the past and stamped them in its own image. Thus 'power' and sovereignty as they came to be exercised by its successor States very often claimed Mughal origins and had invariably Mughal traditions as their immediate past.

No wonder then that Mughal administrative institutions and practices lingered on and some still linger on in howsoever mutilated a form. These institutions were not all of Mughal origin; many—like the village Patwari and Kulkarni (Muqaddam)—came from the hoary past, some could faintly be seen emerging during the Sultanate, a few had assumed a definite, though not a final, form under Sher Shah Sur. Thus when we talk of the administrative legacy of the Mughals, we are thinking not alone of what the Mughals built nor of what they allowed to stand but also what had continued to persist throughout the ages. It is the legacy of the age, and not of its rulers alone.

First and foremost the Mughals recreated an all-India political authority and with it a unity and a single loyalty. They brought almost the whole of the sub-continent under their control. They brooked no rival authority in their domains. The ancient Rajput houses continued to rule their homelands but as watan jagirs granted by the Mughal emperors. A single public service banded into mansabdars ran the administration throughout the country; its members were supposed to be equally at home in Kabul or Karnatak, in Dacca or Peshawar. A single, though a foreign, language imposed an artificial uniformity in official procedure not easily to be shaken even by rebels against imperial authority. The Mughal coins passed current throughout India. The citizens got accustomed to the rule of a single, though distant, authority. The princely rulers reconciled themselves to continuous direction and subordination to a central authority.

The administration itself survived in some essentials several vicissitudes of fortune. The village, the parganah, the sarkar and the subah persisted, and still persist, as units of administration in States, districts, tahsils (taluqas) and villages. Some of their modern counterparts continue to consist of the same areas as they did in Mughal times. It is necessary to remember that sarkars and subahs were distinct Mughal revivals if not Mughal creations.

The ceremonial side of the Indian government was long dominated by Mughal practices or faint memories thereof. Lady Minto in her *Diary* contrasted her husband's position as Governor-General in India with that he enjoyed in Canada in its splendour, its contrast with the surrounding poverty and its lofty conception of the office of the Governor-General. Like the Mughal emperor, an Indian Governor-General could not permit anything in his entourage to rank second. The medieval splendour of the vicregal life was a sombre reminder of the fictitious origin of the British power in India. The Mughal etiquette governed official intercourse. Presents were long common as indicators of favours sought. The peons and orderlies were as varied in their *kamarbands* as their masters. Wednesday continued as a general day for public interviews granted by administrators. The Governors General, the Governors and lieutenent-governors continued to hold 'durbars' even though the spirit of the institution had passed away long ago.

The British organized their foreign policy with central Asia on memories of what had happened in Mughal India. A quarrel over Herat in Persia led to a foreign policy which could only be understood primarily as a throwback to the Mughal period, even though it was a game between Great Britain and Russia in Asia. It is difficult today to share the contemporary excitement over happenings in Afghanistan and Persia which used so to shake Anglo-Indian officialdom unless we remember the origins of Mughal power in India and likely threats thereto later on.

The British policy towards the tribes in the North-west had been foreshadowed in Shah Jahan's and Aurangzeb's days. Garrisons had been established in outposts, experienced military leaders appointed to guard the approaches, 'considerations' in form of employment in public services elsewhere offered and even allowances of sorts made to some of the more important chiefs.

The practices and usages of the political department governing the relations of the crown yith the States were modelled after the Mughal fashion. Treaties, sanads and engagements played a small part in the relations of Indian States with the British authority. The subsidiary alliance, the doctrine of lapse, the principle of paramountcy were all in turn derived from Mughal usages and tolerated on account of the memory of what had been considered tolerable earlier. The mansabs which the princes had held under the Mughals were reproduced in the honorary ranks the rulers were granted in the army. The titles that would otherwise have looked absurd—*e.g.* Farzand-i-Inglishia, son of the English—were coveted and treasured. Till 1921 the Mughal custom of conducting political relations with States through local governments and authorities persisted. The Imperial Service Corps revived the memories of troops the princes had led to battle-field in Mughal days.

The functions which the British government discharged in India differed so redically from what it did in Great Britain till about the middle of the nineteenth century that they can only be understood as discharged by a legatee of the Mughals. Education for example became a state concern in India long before it did in England. It began by the East India Company's patronizing 'learned natives' and encouraging 'classical education' but developed into a state provision for English education for precisely the same reason as the one that had led the Mughals to encourage Persian. It ran commercial undertakings, it looked after education, its offcers 'graced' the religious and social celebrations 'with their presence,' it encouraged agriculture and promoted trade by positive action. The British administration knew not much of 'public servants'; but 'officers and officials' flourished, like the mansabdars, in the Mughal times. It was the ambition of every Edwards, Lawrence and Clive to make it a government of men and not of laws. Its paternalism flowed from its Mughal inheritance. The abundant use it made of Indian honours mostly derived from the Mughal practices declared its indebtedness to the recent past.

Our educational policy continued to be dominated by the desire of every 'educated' person to seek government employment just as every one learnt Persian in the Mughal period as a path to public preferment. A well-read person—well-read in Persian—engaged in trade or commerce was considered to be a freak in the Mughal period just as an 'English educated' Indian was supposed, till recently, to be a misfit anywhere else except in public administration. The state continued to patronize Persian even when it ceased to be the official language.

The East India Company as a 'state' assumed commercial functions long before nationalization was thought of in the West. It succeeded to the Mughal legacy of state monopoly of salt and opium and Mughal maintainance of a large number of imperial warkshops turning out articles of necessity as well as of luxury. Naturally this led to several commercial undertaking—like railways and telephones—becoming wholly or in part state concerns long before they were taken over by the state in Great Britain.

The agricultural policy of the East India Company again drew its inspiration mainly from the Mughal practices. The taqavi—advances for improving agricultural methods, introducing better crops, or bringing new lands under cultivation—still flourishes under its Mughal name. Remissions in land revenue are granted to agriculturists still on conditions that govened them in the Mughal times.

The assessment and collection of land revenue over the greater part of India follow Mughal precedents. The permanent settlement of the land revenue in Bengal was supposed to follow the Mughal system however ill understood. Other methods of land revenue assessment claimed to embody Mughal practice and were in line with the Mughal system known as Nasaq. The instructions issued to settlement commissioners read very much like a modern version of Todar Mal's system. Land revenue continues to be collected without any legislative authorization or statutory enactment of its principles as a customary payment—i.e. as it had become customary to pay it during the Mughal period. The land revenue officials, in the tahsil or the taluqa, continue to bear their Mughal titles in the north—Tahsildar, Khazanchi, Siyaha Nawis, Wasilbaqi Navis and Qanungo—and their local versions in the Mughal south. As in the Mughal days title to land concerns the state as the recipient of the land revenue, and is therefore first determined in the revenue courts under the Collector. The village Patwari continues to maintain records and the Collector's office continues to make their decennial abstracts as they did in the palmiest days of the Mughal empire. The Patwari maintains his diary not only as a record useful for regenue purposes but also as the raw material useful to the Mughal news-writers. He performs his seasonal *girdawari*, making a record of holdings, crops and cultivation, as of old. The Qanungo descends on him during those days, checking his records as his predecessors did in the Mughal times. The Malba, a levy to meet the expenses of the petty officials visiting the village, continued to be collected till recently as a forbidden Mughal impost. The Patwari long remained an 'unclassified' public servant not entitled to many privileges other public servants enjoyed because even when his salary came to be paid by the state, the Mughal conception of his being a representative of the villagers still persisted.

Land revenue apart, the Indian fiscal system continued to bear some resemblance to its prototype in the Mughal period for long. Profits from commercial undertakings, the pilgrimage tax, now raised for maintaining sanitory conditions at the time of great fairs, chaukidari cese in villages, demand for free labour and compulsory *begar* and the professional tax all date back to the Mughal days, if not earlier. The sales tax has now been revived. The octroi, called *jaqat* in some parts, is a modern descendent of secularized zakat.

The religious policy of the British in India was usually modelled after the best of the Mughal traditions, those of Akbar's days. Religious neutrality was coupled with an assertion that on humanitarian grounds and for convenience of administration religious scruples would not be respected. The banning of Sati under William Bentinck was a logical extension of Mughal prohibition of forcible burning. Tolerating drinking, even though forbidden by Islam, was a Mughal concession to human weakness which continued in principle just before prohibition was launched. Segragaton of prostitutes and women of ill repute in special quarters went back to Akbar's days, though modern legislation has annexed Aurangzeb's policy of entirely banning the profession. The permissive remarriage of widows had been anticipated by him. Child marriage, penalized now, was discouraged by Akbar, with the same disappointing results. The secular character of the Indian state today fulfils a dream of Akbar which unfortunately he was not able to realize in its entirety in his own days.

The police in India was long modelled after the Mughal fashion. The *Kotwal* was long a terror to the evil doers and sometimes to the innocents as well. The methods of detection of crime continued to be based on the principle that confession, however obtained, is the best solvent of all troubles. Some of the records maintained can trace their origins to the instructions issued by the Mughal emperors.

The tradition of 'officials' rather than public servants harks back to the Mughal days when a mansabdar stood apart from the rest of the community and a clerk was synonymous with evil machinations. The Mughal government was a government of men very often in practice even though it proclaimed itself as a government of laws occasionally. The 'men' had to be propitiated with gifts and presents, in season and out of season. All officials and clerks expected to be rewarded for doing their duty towards citizens and would take it ill if they were passed over. The servants of the East India Company inherited this tradition and if anything worsened it. Even when better conditions came to prevail among the higher civil servants, many found it impossible to fight the older conception that a 'public office' was a lawful means of making money in all possible ways. The public attitude towards graft remains as in Mughal days: it is looked upon as a sure method of getting things done.

It has sometimes been claimed that Urdu is a Mughal gift to India. Chronologically the origins of a 'vulgar tongue' in India may be traced to a much earlier period. Khusru compiled a rhyming dictionary early in the fourteenth century. The Mughal emperors are not known to have patronized any one of the contemporary writers of Urdu. They did not use it for their records. Nagri script and Hindi survived here and there in odd administrative corners. Hindi and Sanskrit may owe a good deal to them but not much can be claimed for them on behalf of Urdu.

Such is in brief our administrative debt to the Mughal period. We have to try hard to shake off some of it. A part did solid work, for good or for evil, till 1947. There is still a substantial part left where 'the past is still with us.' In all the three sectors a knowledge of origins may help us in understanding the present and where necessary, enable us to plan the future more successfully.

Coming out shortly

THE CRESCENT IN INDIA

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